THE OFFICIAL SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE



SEGA No.1 FOR SATURN

ISSUE 17 £2.75
MARCH 1997



SOVIET STRIKE

Reviewed Inside - EA's Blockbuster Shooter Finally Hits Saturn!

SCUD RACE

Witness the Power of the Amazing New AM2 Daytona Sequel!

HEXEN

The Best PC Conversion Yet? Read the First Review!

EXCLUSIVE!

MANX TT

HAS THE MIGHTY SEGA RALLY FINALLY MET ITS MATCH?

RESIDENT EVIL! COMING TO SATURN – OFFICIAL!



THE BLACKHEADS
OUT NOW ON TAPE.
REMOVES BLACKHEADS QUICKLY AND GENTLY
UNBLOCKS PORES
OXY BLACKOUT
IF YOU'RE SERIOUSLY INTO BLACKHEADS, AND YOU'D RATHER NOT BE, CHECK OUT NEW OXY BLACKOUT. IT HAS SPECIAL STICKY TAPES THAT LIFT OUT BLACKHEADS GENTLY. BLACKHEADS? OXYCUTE 'EM!
OXY AND OXYCUTE 'EM! ARE TRADE MARKS.



Virtua Fighter 3™

It's been a huge month in terms of Sega news. Of course, the best tidings of all have been concerning Sega's merging with the toy giant Bandai, forming a new company, SegaBandai (great name eh?). This opens up a whole new world as far as Sega is concerned. Bandai may not be a huge name over here, but they have been responsible for the some of the biggest mass market crazes in the toy world, most notably the Power Rangers.

We said in the last issue that Sega and Sega Saturn have moved firmly into the realms of the hardcore gamesplayer and that Sony have caught the mass market. With the Bandai merger, Sega are now able more than ever to do battle with its giant competition. In fact. Japanese observers have remarked that the mighty Nintendo might have to merge with someone in order to measure up to the behemoth companies that are Sony and SegaBandai.

One thing's for sure: nothing's going to happen overnight and for the time being at least, it's business as usual at Sega and its R&D departments as they prepare the next batch of wondergames, including the potentially amazing Virtua Fighter 3...

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EDITORIAL
Editor **Richard Leadbetter**
Art Editor **Dave Kelsall**
Staff Writer **Lee Nutter**

Contributors **Gordon Barrick, Paul Glancey, Ed Lomas, "Manual" Daniel Jevons, Angus Swan**
Japan Editor **Warren Harrod**
Cover Art **© AM3, Sega of Japan**

ADVERTISING
Advertising Manager **Lisa Hawkes**
Deputy Ad Manager **Chris Perera**

MARKETING
Marketing Executive **Claire Matthews**
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Systems Manager **Sarah-Jane Leavey**
Scitex Manager **Sarah Best**
Production Manager **Sam Lee**

SEGA Liaison **Mark Maslowicz**

Editorial Contact **Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Telephone: (0171) 972 6700 (NO TIPS CALLS) Fax (0171) 972 6701**

Distribution **BBC Frontline**
Printing **Cooper Clegg and Spottyswoode Ballantyne.**

"Take your big stick and your boyfriend and go find yourself a bus to catch."
- Hard Target

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE USE DOLBY SURROUND TO TEST ALL SOFTWARE

COVER STORY



FEATURE

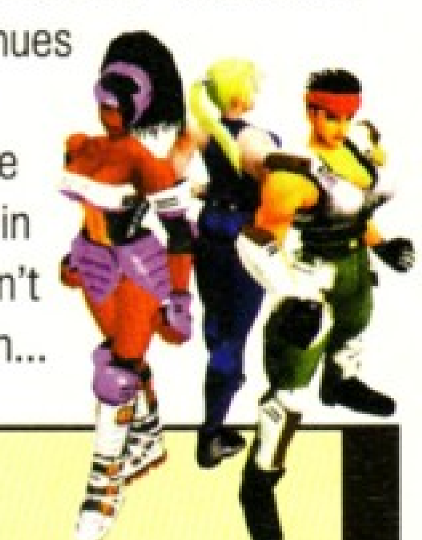




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PLUS!

NEWS

The first SATURN MAG produced in 1997 and you guessed it, it's a good one. There could have been no better cover than Manx TT (which has actually turned out really well) and contents-wise, the mag is packed to bursting with great games and the best tips. We're particularly proud of the Exhumed Masters' Guide (just watch it get ripped off by our pathetic competition). So another issue, another journalistic triumph eh? On a sad note, this month sees the publication of the last issue of our sister magazine, Mean Machines Sega. It's a bit tragic to see it go, especially as I helped launch it all those years ago, and it was also my first editorship. But on the plus side, their passing should mean more readers and more power for SSM! Also, the MMS team will be merging with us to make this mag even more supreme, which can't be bad. And remember: *NO SSM, NO MERCY!*

Richard Leadbetter, Editor.

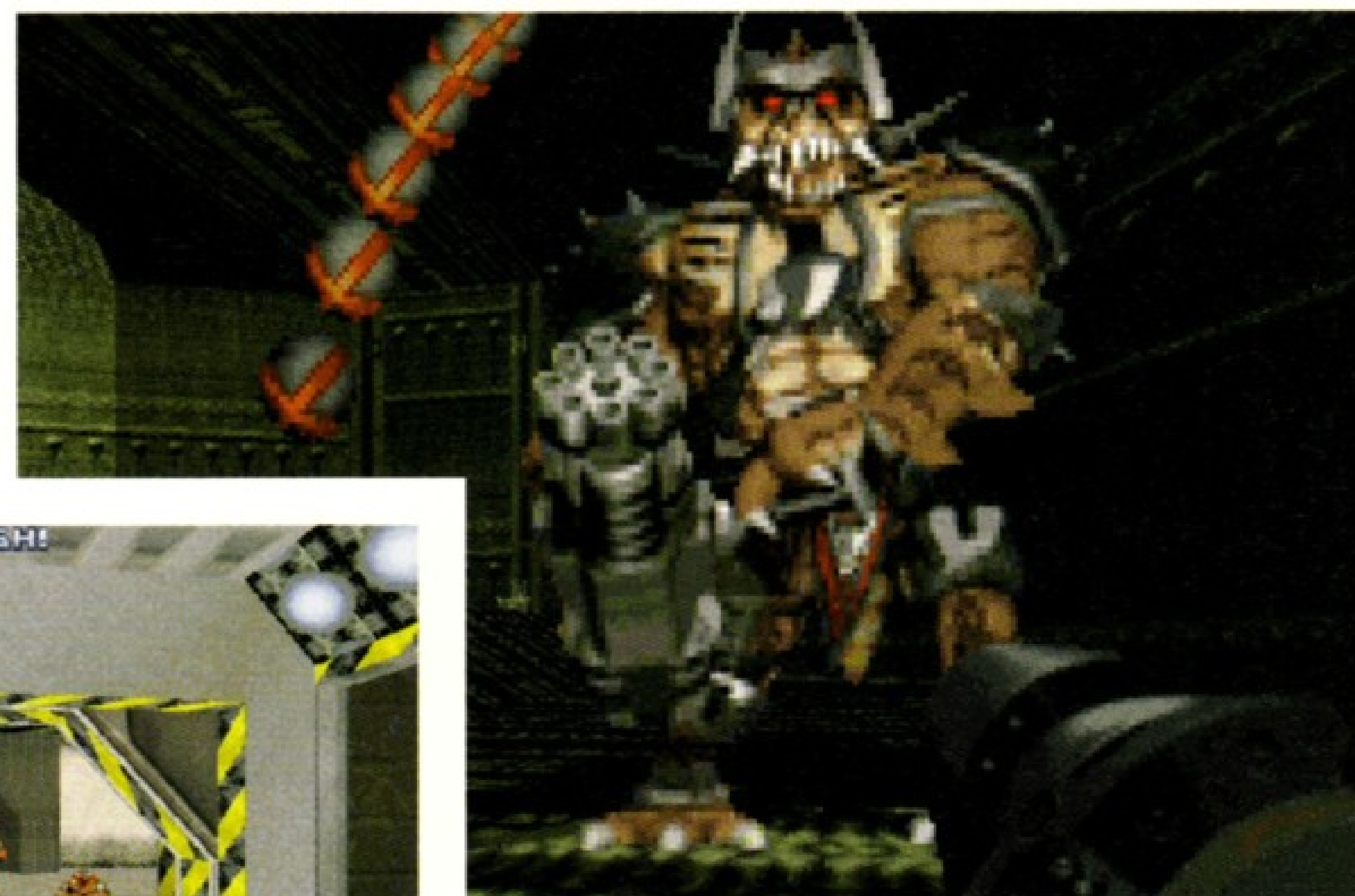


IT'S OFFICIAL

LOBOTOMY TO PRODUCE DUKE NUKEM 3D!

One of the most eagerly awaited Sega Saturn titles of the year must be the conversion of 3D Realms super-impressive first person perspective 3D blaster, Duke Nukem 3D. Now the excitement reaches fever pitch as it is announced that Lobotomy Software are producing the Saturn version!

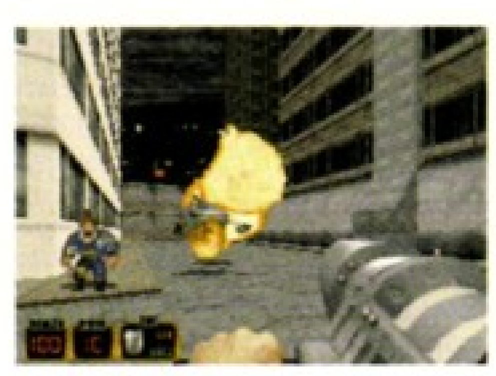
If you don't know who Lobotomy are, shame on you! They are the immensely talented bunch of guys behind the greatest Saturn first person 3D blaster around, Exhumed. Graphically, these guys can do things with the Saturn that'll make your head spin! We're talking super-smooth frame rates, light-sourcing... the whole nine yards. In fact, for a taste of their genius, check out the incredible Exhumed Masters' Guide found on page 86.





Just before the mag went to press GT Interactive told us the news and SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has unearthed some more details. Firstly, full-on link-up modes are being promised. That means NetLink action for sure, and quite possibly link-up cable stuff too. This is excellent news: DukeMatch on PC is one of the best multiplayer experiences you can get.

But at the moment, work is at very early stages over at Lobotomy. The guys are dissecting the PC version to see what makes it tick, and they're also in the stages of upgrading the already awesome Exhumed engine. From the look of Exhumed, it looks like Lobotomy already have the technology to make a truly memorable conversion of Duke Nukem 3D, and in a recent interview with SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, Lobotomy's Ezra Dreisbach said, "The main problem with porting these games [Duke Nukem and Quake] is that currently they work on engines that are not ideal for the Saturn. The temptation when doing the port is to try to make the existing engine run on the Saturn. The result will probably not run as fast as is possible."





Well, with Lobotomy on the case already with a Saturn-specific engine in the game we should be looking forward to a conversion of only the very highest quality. And if you think that Exhumed pushed the Saturn to its limits, think again. Ezra Dreisbach also said. "The engine could probably be made about 20% faster just with general tightening and more assembly. Also, one of my co-workers came up with a way to do more realistic dynamic lighting."

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE couldn't have recommended the Duke conversion job to any other company - Lobotomy will ensure that this game is incredible! Rest assured, we will be following up this story just as soon as we can...







Exhumed (above) shows that Lobotomy can easily convert Duke!

THE MOST REALISTIC SATURN GAME YET?

Though it may not look it from these screen shots, GT Interactive's new signing is set to be one of the most intriguing blends of arcade and adventure gameplay yet seen on the Saturn.

It's called Abe's Oddysee (sic) and has been developed by Oddworld Inhabitants, a team of programmers set up in 1994 by two veterans of the computer special effects industry, Sherry McKenna and Lorne Lanning.

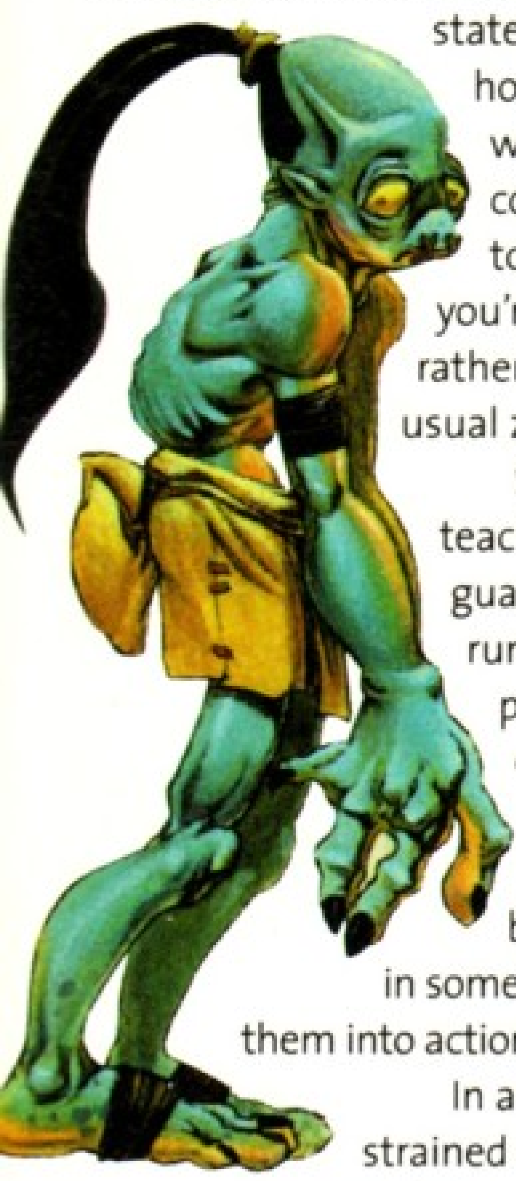
Abe's Oddysee looks similar to such 16-bit classics as Flashback and Another World, but Oddworld are promising a much greater depth of gameplay. In the game, ex-slave Abe has to complete a trap-packed quest which will establish his right to the leadership of his people. Once he's done that he has to single-handedly take on a sinister corporation which is threatening to grind his people into hamburgers.

All this is played out in what GT are describing as "a unique combination of gaming and storytelling," that uses "the world's most advanced 3D production techniques". Apparently, Abe's Oddysee isn't so much a game as "a story dwelling experience".



This "Story Dwelling" bit is actually a sort of game design philosophy that Oddworld have concocted, and it affects several aspects of the game. One part of the Story Dwelling code observes the player's movements and actions and somehow uses them to determine his or her state of mind. It then changes the mood of Abe to reflect that state of mind, making him act and look as if he is exhausted, frustrated, scared, pleased or whatever. In its turn, Abe's state of mind has an effect on how other characters react when they meet him, and of course that . All this is meant to make you feel more like you're actually in Abe's shoes, rather than simply controlling the usual zombie puppet.





Story Dwelling also involves teaching the player the language of the alien world he's running around in. This manifests itself in a process of learning control combinations which elicit verbal responses from the characters. The characters are all programmed to behave intelligently, responding not just to events, but to nearby sounds, such as weapon fire, and in some cases, even the smell of Abe is enough to lure them into action.

In an effort to make the gameplay seem as unrestrained as possible, Oddworld have made the game completely non-linear with numerous solutions to problems, thus catering for lateral thinkers. There are even several paths to the game's conclusion, some of which hinge on major ethical decisions embedded in the action.



Apparently this is going to be a really hot game...

All this sounds very promising, but is this going to be one of those games were all the high-falutin' ideas get in the way of the entertainment? GT have very high hopes that when Abe's Oddysee is released in the autumn it will establish itself as a groundbreaking game. We look forward to seeing more on this game in the very near future, and when we see it, so will you.

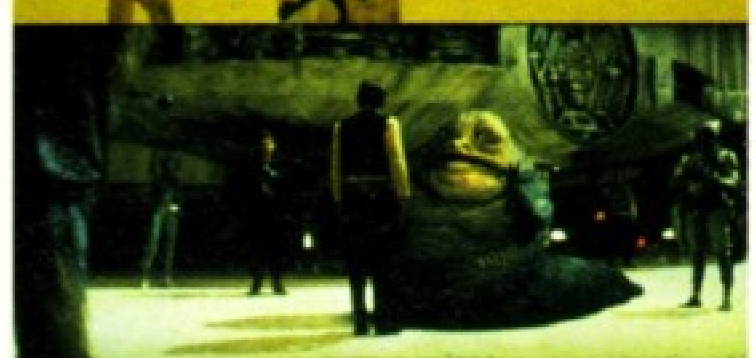




STAR WARS IS BACK

Okay, so this really doesn't have that much relevence to the world of Saturn gaming, but you just can't avoid the fact that Star Wars is returning to silver screens 20 years after its cinematic debut! As you've probably heard by now, George Lucas has commissioned an all-new digital surround soundtrack and visual special effects for all three films that comprise the Star Wars Trilogy.





The excitement truly begins on March 21when Star Wars: A New Hope is released. Lucasfilm's elite special effects group Industrial Light and Magic have worked overtime to produce some stunning all-new special effects, including what looks like a complete repopulation of the planet Tattooine (there's a lot more going on in Mos Eisley Space Port) and a far superior computer rendered assault on the Death Star at the film's end.

Also included in Star Wars is the much-vaunted Jabba scene, where the nefarious gangster confronts Han Solo in front of the Millennium Falcon in Docking Bay 94, assisted by Boba Fett (who didn't turn up until The Empire Strikes Back in the original trilogy).

Lucasfilm have revealed little about the enhancements they've made to Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi, but it shouldn't take too long find out (and just how can they improve on the originals' special effects?). The films are being released at two week intervals. SSM staff members will be at each and every opening night... unless we can blag free preview seats.





WILD NINES

NEWS SPECIAL REPORT

After the less than impressive Saturn outing that was Earthworm Jim 2, Shiny Entertainment have been a little quiet to say the least. However, the good news is that Dave Perry's California-based development team have been busy cooking up all manner of goodies due to be unveiled in '97. On the PC side there's the innovative 3D adventure, MDK (which may appear on Saturn) but it's the silky smoothness of their forthcoming title Wild Nines that has us drooling with anticipation.

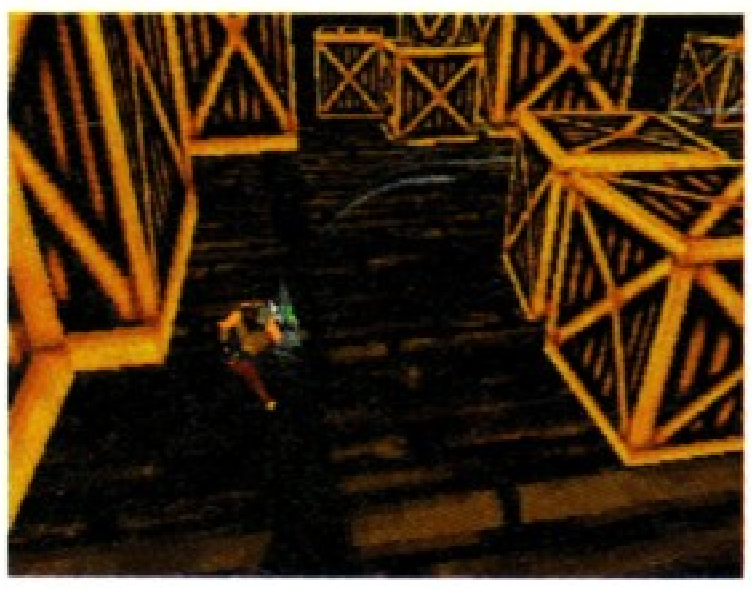
Shiny have gone back to their roots with this colourful platform romp as it features the same standard of animation and tongue-in-cheek humour that made the EWJ games such 16 bit hits. The leap to Saturn has obviously enabled the Wild Nines development team to tinker with some nifty next generation hardware, the results of which were initially unveiled to SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE at last year's ECTS. The wacky world of Wild Nines features polygon characters, based on detailed hand drawn sketches, which are then placed into a variety of convincing 3D worlds. Players attempt to run, blast and dodge their way through each stage before taking on a number of tricky bosses. While this style of gameplay may be nothing new, Shiny's are confident that their space-based platformer will be something rather special...



WHAT'S THE STORY?

Wild Nines follows the misadventures of a reluctant hero by the name of Wex. The year is 2072 and the World Aeronautic Space Alliance (WASA) has lead Earth in conquering all nine planets in the known solar system. WASA's chief exploratory astronaut, Major John Major, has been chosen to take his family, composed of his wife Jane and their teenage son Wex, on a 25 year fact-finding mission in search of life beyond the Milky Way. When the Majors' vessel had reached the end of the galaxy, they were hurtled into an unknown world. Without warning, their ship came under brutal attack by what appeared to be uniformed alien creatures. To save their son, John Major pushed Wex into an escape vessel, and then hit the "eject" button. Wex slid away screaming, with the vision of his mother and father being attacked to haunt him for the rest of his life...

Landing on an alien planet within the spiralling Annapolis Cluster, Wex soon discovers an extraordinary metallic glove called "The Rig". Strapping the device on enables Wex to tap into a seemingly unlimited power source capable of producing devastating energy blasts. As if this wasn't impressive enough our unlikely hero is shocked to discover that there's a small creature living in the weapon, a bizarre bat-dog lifeform called B'Angus (that's a silent 'B' by the way). Wex soon teams up with a further eight orphaned teenagers and they band together to take on the source of all their troubles, the invincible Karn and his evil organisation, Domination. Karn can be best described as an enormous 376 year old face (measuring the size of two football fields) mounted on the ceiling of his palace headquarters, on the outer perimeter of the Cluster. Cyberkinetically connected to Karn is a monstrous gun known as the Zero Cannon, which is shooting everything within a 500-mile radius of the palace.









The 3D is spectacular, as you can see!

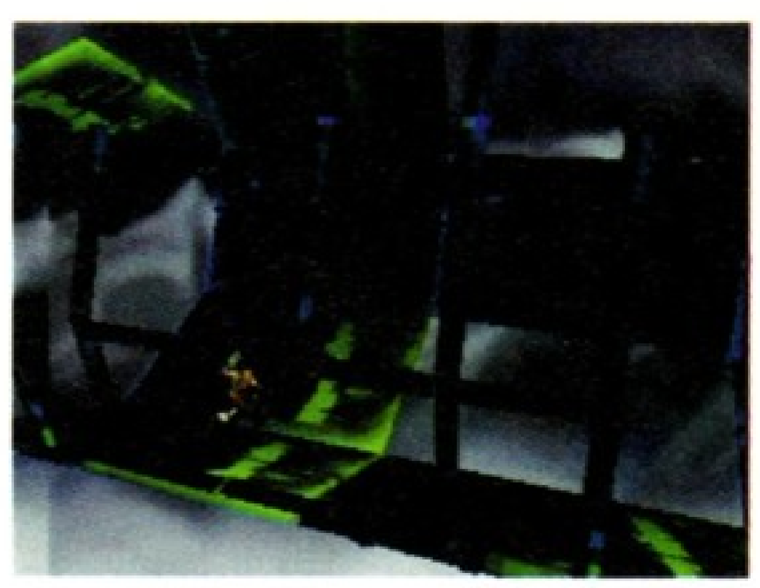
Wild Nines is being developed on Saturn first.

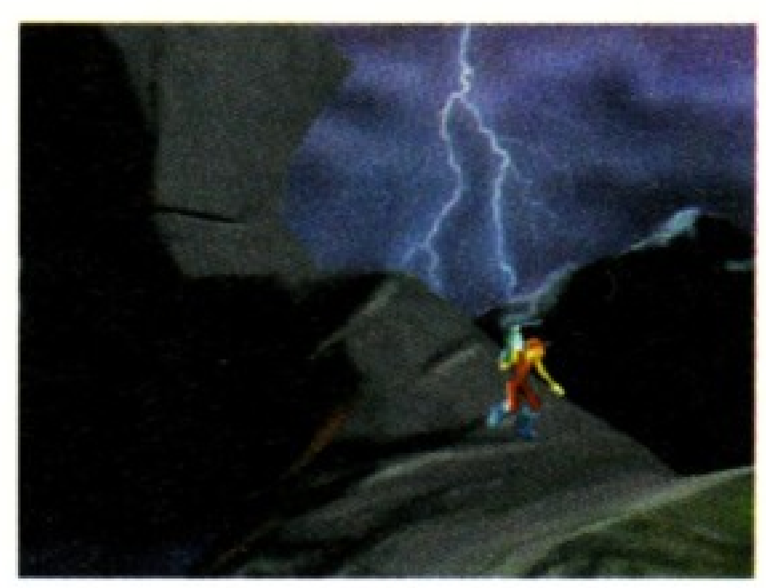


Shiny's animation reaches new heights in the phenomenal looking Wild Nines!













Hmmm. Wonder what's going on here then?





SHINY HAPPY PEOPLE

If this all sounds slightly weird then you'd be right. After all, any video game company that manages to make cows and sheep seem cool (EWJ 1 & 2) has to have a few screws loose. Shiny are promising Saturn owners a truly unique title with Wild Nines scheduled for a September 9th release. Currently the game boasts 24 detailed characters, at least 10 levels of mayhem and certainly one of the more 'interesting' video game storylines of the year. However, the game's most intriguing feature has to be the debut of 'The Rig'. Shiny describe the device as "a Matter to Energy to Matter Emulator" that takes the characteristics of an object and then uses an energy beam to force those same characteristics onto its target. Dave Perry elaborates "If a bowling ball is fed into the RIG, the energy beam then fired would cause the target (enemy soldier) to swell into a spherical shape and become rigid, a giant bowling ball. It can then be pushed, rolling over other enemies or even through brick walls. The effect of the beam however only lasts 10 seconds."

If Wild Nines actually lives up to its own hype then Saturn owners in desperate need of an original 3D platforming fix should have something to smile about come September.





Shiny always put a great deal of effort into their developmental sketches and character work-ups, and some of the fruits of their labours can be seen dotted around this Special Report. The fact is that with its innovative style and potentially spectacular visuals, Shiny are on to another winner with their first true 32-bit product!

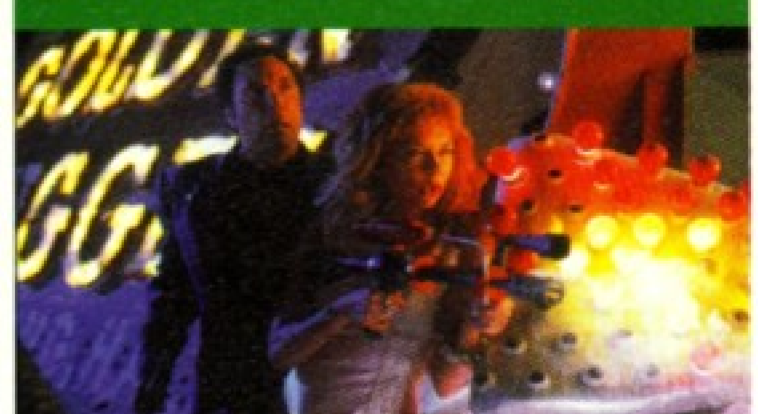


MARS ATTACKS!

(In your best Homer Simpson voice) Mmmmmmm... Slaughter in the suburbs! Mass destruction of cattle and innocent civilians being blasted into oblivion!

Thankfully most of the ingredients of the original 50s trading cards on which MARS ATTACKS has been based have remained intact in the stunning movie adaption by Director Tim Burton due to open in cinemas across the UK from 28th February.

The suitably gross looking aliens (see below) are courtesy of the technical wizards at Industrial Light and Magic supported by an all-star cast including Jack Nicholson as the president (with Glenn Close as the first lady), Annette Bening, Danny Devito and Michael J Fox amongst others! Incidentally, Pierce Brosnan and Sarah Jessica Parker supply some excellent laughs when they become the result of the aliens human experiments (including a dog) on board one of the UFO's. Oh, and Tom Jones is... Tom Jones! Whereas a lot of people may have been disappointed by the 'Comedy B-Movie' aspect of the recent INDEPENDENCE DAY, this is, unashamedly, what MARS ATTACKS is all about and if we ever rated films, which we don't of course, it would almost certainly get a five. (Out of five).







A remake of the classic "Destroying a Dog" bubblegum card by Carl Norem for Topps.

STREET FIGHTER II HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Following on from our fantastic X-Men vs Street Fighter revelation of a couple of issues back, we've got another amazing piece of news for SFII fans. After many a month of rumour and speculation, Capcom sources have finally confirmed that there WILL be a Street Fighter II compilation disc for the Saturn and it should be appearing on the shelves this summer!

Of the five Street Fighter II games – that's Street Fighter II, SFII Championship Edition, SFII Turbo Edition, Super Street Fighter II and Super Street Fighter II X – only three will appear on the disc, and as yet Capcom haven't confirmed which they will be.

So now there is yet more rumour and speculation surrounding the game. It has been mooted that Capcom will release two discs. The first would feature the three most recent Street Fighter titles, Turbo, Super and Super SFII X. The second would be a 'Street Fighter Classics' disc, containing the original SFII and SFII Championship Edition, and perhaps a conversion of the original Street Fighter game for the sakes of completeness and historical whimsy. Another strategy could be to put the first three games on one disc, then have the two 'Super' instalments in the series appearing on the second. Could either of these scenarios be true? Only Capcom themselves know, and they're not saying anything just yet.Whatever the contents of the disc(s), one thing we can be fairly sure of is that the conversions will be flawless, with all the characters, backgrounds, moves and animations of the original arcade games.

More news soon, closer to the disc's summer release.



Arcade Super Street Fighter II Turbo: will this feature in the Capcom pack?



The old Street Fighters are finally coming to Saturn. Let there be a chorus of cheers!

SEGA MERGE WITH BANDAI SHOCKER!

On January 23, it was announced that games giant Sega Enterprises Ltd. and Japan's number one toy manufacturer Bandai Co Ltd. will cease to exist. But before we get thousands of Saturn owners and Power Ranger fans alike hassling us on the phone, they're not disappearing into oblivion, but are merging together to form a multi-media entertainment conglomerate of massive proportions. Bandai will be the dissolving company merging into Sega and bringing with them their vast knowledge on character merchandising, visual and music technologies.

As of October 1 1997, the newly formed company will be named SegaBandai Ltd. and will strive to strengthen their position in the global entertainment market by combining the two companies marketing resources. In theory each company should benefit from the other's strong points. For example Sega's main customers are in about the late teens-early 20s category, whereas Bandai's are much younger. The merger of the two will give each access to a larger group of customers with each benefiting from the others marketing strategies, meaning more Saturns to more people. The new company will be divided into three distinct areas; game machines, multimedia networking and toys with annual sales of the newly formed company expected to exceed 600 Billion Yen, which translates to about 3 Billion(ish) Pounds Sterling.

How will this affect you the Saturn owner though? Well, to be honest it won't in the short term. Until now Bandai have enjoyed a close alliance with Nintendo but for obvious reasons this is now set to change. What this means is exclusive Saturn-only Bandai titles. Aside from this and some management restructuring little has changed to affect the Saturn owner despite ignorant rantings to the contrary in lesser publications. To be honest as long as Sega have the world's best programmers in the AM departments, who gives a toss what they call themselves, as long as it's not Sega Dai or Ban Sega.

BLOCKBUSTER CHARTS

TOP TEN VIDEO GAMES

1	TOMB RAIDER ➡
2	DESTRUCTION DERBY
3	ALIEN TRILOGY
4	WORLDWIDE SOCCER '97
5	NIGHTS
6	EXHUMED
7	TITAN WARS
8	STREET FIGHTER ALPHA
9	WIPEOUT
10	BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN



TOP TEN RENTAL VIDEOS

1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE
2	THE ROCK ➡
3	FROM DUSK TILL DAWN
4	COPYCAT
5	EXECUTIVE DECISION
6	TWELVE MONKEYS
7	HACKERS
8	THE JUROR
9	SCREEMERS
10	KING PIN



TOP TEN RETAIL VIDEOS

1	ALADDIN – KING OF THIEVES
2	TOY STORY
3	101 DALMATIONS
4	HEAT
5	BABE
6	SEVEN ➡
7	TRAINSPOTTING
8	GOLDENEYE
9	BRAVEHEART
10	LORD OF THE DANCE



BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO



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HMV CHARTS

Week ending November 29th

Send us your top ten games and you could be mentioned in this small but significant space next month! You also get a game for your trouble! How lovely! Send 'em to READER CHARTS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. Richard Lyons from Southampton... A copy of Christmas NiGHTS is heading your way!

	HMV CHARTS		SATURN MAGAZINE CHARTS		READER CHARTS
1	Sega Ages	1	Fighters MegaMix	1	NiGHTS
2	Tomb Raider	2	Manx TT Superbike	2	Virtua Cop 2
3	Virtua Cop 2	3	Soviet Strike	3	Street Fighter Alpha 2
4	Command and Conquer	4	Hexen	4	Sega Rally
5	Worldwide Soccer '97	5	Exhumed	5	X-Men: COTA
6	Street Fighter Alpha 2	6	Tomb Raider	6	Worms
7	Doom	7	Die Hard Arcade	7	Loaded
8	Athlete Kings	8	Virtua Fighter 2	8	Virtua Fighter 2
9	Sega Rally	9	Street Fighter Alpha 2	9	Tomb Raider
10	Madden NFL '97	10	Die Hard Trilogy	10	Street Racer

RESIDENT EVIL CONFIRMED!

After months of speculation Capcom of Japan have finally confirmed that last years PlayStation smash-hit Resident Evil is in development for the Saturn. Not content with just converting their 2D arcade beat-em-ups, Resident Evil as it will be known over here is scheduled for release sometime in the summer. No other information or screenshots have been released at this time but speculation is rife as to what form the Saturn version will take.





It is likely that the Saturn version will follow much the same plot as the original PS Resident Evil but with the bugs and irritations taken out, including some of the more awkward camera angles. As far as we know there are no new characters planned but the costume change system may be different. In the PS version you could change the costume of the characters on completion of the game. It is rumoured that in the Saturn version there will be a wider range of costumes which are selectable from the beginning. This is a good possibility as there's little point for Capcom to include secrets from the PlayStation version that everyone knows about. No new monsters are planned either but they will be redesigned to bring the polygon count down to a manageable level.



Those people who haven't seen Resident Evil will no doubt be wondering what all the fuss is about. Well it caused a huge stir last year when it was released on the PS and was a massive commercial success. Obviously Capcom will be hoping for similar success with the new version. The game has been described as a survival horror and it's not hard to see why. It follows the exploits of the two main characters, Jill Valentine and Chris Redfield who are both members of the STARS (Special Tactics And Rescue Service) Alpha team. They have been called to investigate a series of grisly murders at a place known as Raccoon City. The gameplay is similar in essence to Alone In The Dark but far better requiring a great deal of exploration and puzzle solving. But the gore factor was clearly the most popular aspect of Resident Evil. Still, the Saturn version is due in Spring in Japan so we should have some proper Saturn shots next issue.

YOU HAVE BEEN JUDGED!

Riding high on the amazing success of Tomb Raider, Core's new project is a 3D scrolling beat 'em up going by the provisional title of Judgment Force. It's being developed by the people responsible for Thunderhawk 2 and bears obvious similarities to the classic Mega Drive Streets of Rage. In fact we believe the game was actually intended to be a SOR game, however when Core showed an interest in making this a multi-format game the idea was dropped. However the Saturn version is quite a way ahead of the PS version and should be out in September.

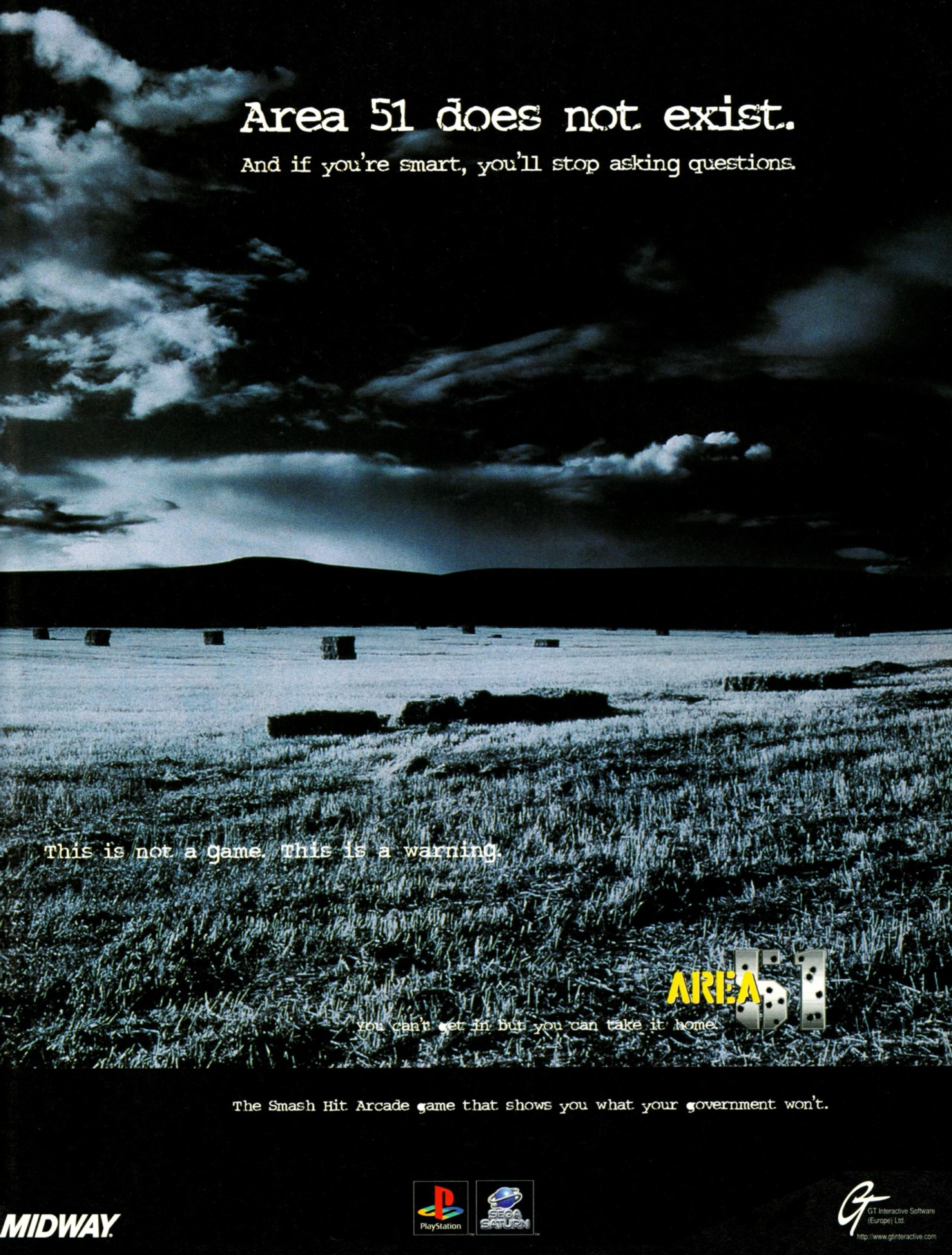
The game itself is not dissimilar to Sega's own Die Hard Arcade but even at this early stage shows signs of surpassing it with a much greater freedom of movement. The player is free to roam around the 3D levels (of which 15 are planned) each with multiple routes beating up the hordes of Reservoir Dogs style gangsters. Currently only one level is playable but already it pretty looks incredible. There are four characters to choose from each with their own fighting style and around 40 to 50 moves. Only one of these characters was playable in the early version we played, Hawk, but had a good variety of moves including a head butt and a roundhouse kick which has a cool light trail following the foot. Weapons can also be used and are littered about the ground for you to retrieve. There is also a fair bit of bloodshed when beating up the gangsters which looks excellent unless you live in Germany where of course it will be green. Core are also planning to have a lot of interaction with the environment in much the same way as in VC2. Already you can smash people through glass elevators like in Raxel's stage of Fighting Vipers and in the finished version you'll be able to do a lot more damage too.

We're predicting that this game is going to be big this summer, so you can guarantee that we'll be following it very closely until then...





Die Hard Arcade with more characters and more freedom? Yup!



Area 51 does not exist.
And if you're smart, you'll stop asking questions.
This is not a game. This is a warning.
AREA 51
You can't get in but you can take it home.
The Smash Hit Arcade game that shows you what your government won't.
MIDWAY
PlayStation
SEGA SATURN
GT Interactive Software (Europe) Ltd.
http://www.gtinteractive.com

MANX TT Super Bike



It's a scientific fact that nothing can match the power of Sega's elite AM arcade divisions. We've all thrilled to the Virtua Fighter series and Sega Rally Championship... and now from the same stable we finally have the long awaited Manx TT Superbike. RICH LEADBETTER reports.



It's been worth the wait. That was the first thought that went through my brain as soon as I sat down for my first playtest with the much anticipated Manx TT Superbike. And I must admit to being just a bit surprised.

Right from the very beginning, there seems to have been doubts about the potential of a Sega Saturn Manx TT conversion. First of all there seemed to be little intelligence to be gleaned from the Japanese programmers and development staff at Sega . And then when there finally was an official announcement, still nobody knew who was converting the game across from Model 2 onto Saturn. Then there were all the high resolution at 60 frames per second rumours, which proved to be totally unfounded. After that it became apparent that Manx TT Saturn was being coded by Tantalus - an Australian based programming team best known perhaps for converting PlayStation titles to Saturn to varying degrees of success. To cap it all off, nobody outside of Sega actually got to see the game, which is a surefire indicator to grizzled, battle-weary journos such as myself that maybe the product "isn't all that". Re-enter Sega of Japan. Key development personnel were dispatched to Tantalus to help out the programmers and push Manx TT to the heady realms of Grade A quality software. That's where I come in.

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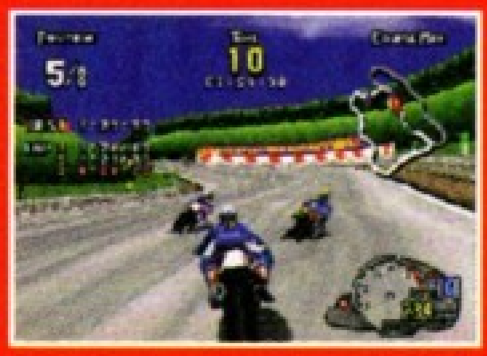
The tunnel section from the beginner's course is coming into view in the picture at the top. The shot below shows the impressive two-player mode. It's a huge improvement over the split-screen in Daytona CCE.





Manx TT is one of the most eagerly awaited Sega Saturn titles of 1997 and it's looking extremely tasty indeed - finally it would appear that Sega Rally Championship has some competition

FIRST IMPRESSIONS



Unofficially, Manx TT Superbike is kind of like the sequel to Sega Rally Championship. The original coin-op was put together by a great many of the AM3 people behind Rally, including the game's director, Tetsuya Mizuguchi. It runs on the same hardware as Rally and also features a cabinet designed by AM4. The same principles that made Rally so ace - namely stunning graphics and incredible realism - are also key concepts behind Manx TT. But without the brilliant cabinet, how does Saturn Manx TT compare?

The first thing that hits you is the quality of the visuals. Clearly the resolution and frame rate have suffered and yet and at the same time, Saturn Manx does an excellent job of emulating its coin-op parent. It seems that no matter how densely populated the track is with scenery and bikes, the frame rate never dips below Sega Rally standard 30 frames per second. Considering the detail of the Isle of Man TT track, this is a pretty creditable achievement. This graphics engine is pretty impressive indeed, with a superior frame rate and better clipping (and consequently less pop-up) than the recently released Daytona Championship Circuit Edition.

Considering the build-up behind Manx TT, it's good to see that at least visually the game delivers pretty well... well enough indeed to Sega Europe to make this title their biggie for the Easter selling season.





ALL-IMPORTANT HANDLING

If there is one lesson to be learned from Daytona CCE, it's clearly "Don't mess with the arcade original's playability". Or something. Perhaps the most pleasant surprise about Manx TT is that the handling of the bike just feels pretty damn good. Without the enormous sit-on bike of the arcade game, Manx could have lost a great of its appeal. However, even without the bike, the conversionsmiths have done an excellent job. What is clear is that you definitely need a NiGHTS analogue pad in order to get the most out of Manx TT. Leaning into corners, piling on the revs



At the time of writing, Tantalus have managed to get Manx TT firmly locked at 30 frames per second with no slow-down whatsoever, even on the bike-packed starting grid. Truly this game is shaping up to be impressive. Most impressive.



In a lot of driving games, often it's best to stick to the out-of-vehicle perspective. Don't do it on Manx TT! You get a brilliant sense of speed and some stunning leaning views if you stick with the rider's eyes view (as in this picture).







Another one of those stunning "leaning views" as seen from the rider's eye perspective. Here we're racing through a thin Isle of Man street.







is an experience very close to the coin-op original. The eponymous Superbike's all-important "flickability" is very, very authentic to the arcade game. Impressive. Most impressive.

Closeness to the arcade version is guaranteed and Sega are now working on making the Saturn version a more lastable experience

LASTABILITY? GOOD QUESTION

The big question mark hanging over Manx TT Superbike ever since the conversion was announced deals heavily with the game's lastability. The coin-op original was designed as an arcade game, with short-term thrills obviously being more important than long-term replayability. That being the case, the game only had one bike to choose from and just two tracks.

Obviously this isn't good enough for a home Saturn game which people are going to have shell out over forty quid for. Taking a leaf out of the original Daytona USA conversion's book, Manx TT features both an Arcade Mode and Saturn Mode. The former is just what you would expect - a very close rendition of the lastability-challenged coin-op, with even the arcade's presentation screens included for your delectation. This is a close conversion all right... the arcade game is notoriously difficult and this challenge remains in full effect here.

However, of more interest is the Saturn Mode. This allows you to practise the tracks, or take up the Manx TT challenge, which is kind of similar to the Championship mode of Sega Rally in that you tackle the tracks one after the other. Adding to the lastability is the inclusion of many different production motorcycles for you to try out.

The Saturn Mode is also where you're going to find the majority of the game's hidden bits. Designed to increase lastability still further, we've been sworn to secrecy about the details of these secrets, but hey - it's a racing game. You should be able to guess at least some of them... But still, for the time being, my lips are sealed.

REVIEW NEXT MONTH?

Manx TT Superbike's progress is shooting along at a rapid old pace. At the time of writing, new versions are appearing at Sega Europe every other day! The programmers at Tantalus are working overtime to get the game complete and make the most from the arcade's incredible potential. That being the case, Sega are intending to get the game in the shops in time for Easter - the end of March, basically. Read the review next month, plus you can thrill to the excellent Showcase coverage we have lined up. Everything (well almost) will be revealed! Awesome!



The beginner Laxay course of Manx TT Superbike is pictured here. A pretty simple course, expert riders can zoom around it at maximum speeds, decelerating for just one of the corners on the track. Cool.









The level of detail that Tantalus have managed to cram into Manx TT Superbike is excellent. Some might say that Sega Rally has finally been dethroned as the most detail-packed, 30 frames per second racer. Just look at the screenshots!

HISTORY OF THE TT

You might think that Isle of Man would be a strange place to hold an international event. And you'd be right. When the first Tourist Trophy (TT) race was held, Britain still had a 14 mph speed limit - hardly the velocity required for hardcore racing! Still, it was 1907. Thankfully the Isle of Man was more accommodating and the race was held there, with the winning biker collecting a massive (for the time) twenty five pounds in prize money! By 1911, things had moved on sufficiently to introduce different classes of race depending on the power of the engine and the race was also moved from its initial small track onto a larger course which was also used for the Touring Car races of the time. The Isle of Man TT continued to grow ever more popular, despite a short stoppage of the proceedings during the First World War. Technology continued to improve as well - by now the bikes were averaging between 40 mph and 50 mph during the race. Hardly earth-shattering by our standards, but there was nothing like it at the time. It might interest you to note that the course seen in Manx TT Superbike first came into use decades ago - 1922 to be precise. Not a great deal has changed architecturally since that date, giving the game a bizarre mixture of modern day speed with the look of yesteryear!



INTRODUCING... THE SPLIT-SCREEN

Manx TT Superbike offers the obligatory split-screen two-player mode. At the time of writing there's still a great deal of work to be done here, but the basic principles are in place and the work on the game engine is pretty much complete. It's definitely a case of "hats off to the conversion team" for their work on the split-screen mode. It's more Sega Rally than Daytona CCE, with excellent update and good clipping. Hopefully the slower player boost and head start options of Rally will make their way into the final version. It's important to note that you can use all of the extra bikes from Saturn Mode in split-screen two-player, adding still further to the lastability (good players can handicap themselves with slower bikes etcetera)...







Isle of Man action! One of the best things about Manx TT Superbike is fact that the courses are real. The AM3 team that produced the game certainly did their homework in making the game look authentic.

AURAL AMBIENCE

One thing which hasn't been settled at the time of writing is exactly what's happening with the music and sound effects in the Saturn rendition of Manx TT Superbike. The original coin-op featured an impressive sound system built into the underside of the bike set-up you sat down on. The AM3 team behind the game sampled actual motorbike engine noises which sounded especially ace (probably because of the powerful sub-woofer loudspeaker built into the cabinet). It would be very, very good indeed if the same kind of throaty engine note could be heard in the Saturn version, along with some suitably raucous raawwwwk music. Or something. Fingers crossed eh?



REALISTIC DYNAMICS

One of the best things about Manx TT is the control method, which feels very realistic indeed. The game features all of the wheelie, full throttle activities of the arcade original and these dynamics are extended to the CPU players as well as yourself. That being the case, you can witness the computer-controlled bikers jumping over hills and even wiping out! There is some perverse satisfaction to be gleaned from sending a CPU player sprawling onto the tarmac, his bike sliding into the distance!







VIEW TO A THRILL

Just like Sega Rally, Manx TT Superbike features two separate perspectives to enjoy the action with... and they make a radical difference to the gameplay for once. With the standard chase-cam, situated above and behind the player, it's very Super Hang On-esque, detached from the action but easier to control. Rabid thrill seekers should definitely opt for the first person perspective. This is situated far closer to the road, giving a superior sense of speed, but better yet is the view when you lean the bike over. The entire screen leans around with you... and effect which is simply excellent (and makes for some very dramatic screenshots).







ARCADE ACTION

Let's quickly check out the Arcade Mode of Manx TT Superbike. Well, as you can see, the actual in-game bike action is very similar to the coin-op and to be honest, this isn't really so different to the all-new, lastability enhanced Saturn Mode. But you do get the original Manx TT arcade presentation screens, where you have to tilt the bike to select the course you desire along with your choice of manual or automatic gears.





TWO BASIC TRACKS

The two separate courses from the arcade original have been converted across lock, stock and barrel, with very little in the way of detail compromised. You get the beginners Laxay course, which is used to help you get to grips with the controls. The actual bends and corners shouldn't really pose that much of a problem... indeed, there's only really one corner which causes any problems at all. This track is pretty basic (like it was in the arcade game), and it should be noted that this course wasn't totally complete when we saw the Saturn game.

The Isle of Man TT Course is a lot closer to completion. The Saturn programmers re-rendered this track first, since it is a lot more complicated that the Laxay track and required more effort. This effort has definitely paid off - the course looks superb from start to finish, with some excellent texture-mapping on the scenery.

All in all, the look of the arcade game has been pretty much retained for Saturn Manx TT - not exactly a mean feat when you consider the sheer power of the Model 2 hardware which powered the coin-op original.















The Saturn Mode of Manx TT has been designed with lastability in mind. So, to start with, check out the selection of bikes, each with their own stats. At the moment they all have the same name, but this is going to be changed. It's likely that you'll get extra bikes by completing the various courses in the game.

MASS DESTRUCTION

Regular readers of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE might remember this game as we previewed it months ago. It used to called simply "Tank". Now it has the considerably more macho title of Mass Destruction. Let the carnage begin anew!

BY	BMG
PRICE	TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	TBA

TANKS FOR THE MEMORY

As you can see, Mass Destruction is a game principally about tanks. Three of them are on offer at the beginning of the game. Essentially, their handling and weaponry is pretty much the same. The differences occur when it comes to the speed and armour levels of the three vehicles. Basically, the more armour your tank is carrying, the slower it is. At this stage in development there doesn't appear to be so much difference between the tanks really, so it's perhaps best to go the best armour.





Some more buildings get it in the explosions packed blasting festival that is Mass Destruction...





Videogames are all about being able to do very exciting things that you just wouldn't be able to get away with in Real Life. From beating the crap out of people through to driving fast cars at ludicrous speeds, just about everything has been covered. Often the most satisfying games are ones where you're in command of some huge mobile fortress and you basically blow the crap out of everything with no regard for human life. Such is the case with Mass Destruction, which has been carefully honed to be (at least potentially) one of the satisfying blasters of recent times.

Any one who has played FirePower or its sequel, Return Fire, should be instantly at home with the kind of no-brainer activities depicted in Mass Destruction. You take control of one of three tanks, each with their own strengths and weaknesses, and your job is to take on various missions proffered to you, which generally involve blowing things up and collecting things. And then blowing more things up.

The game is depicted in super-smooth polygonised 3D (with a screen update of 60 frames per second) and your tank is armed with a variety of weapons, which results in some of the most satisfying pyrotechnics. The landscape is made up of a huge range of buildings, and all of them are completely destructible. Sprite-based explosions abound, and the effects generated depend on the size of the building annihilated along with the weapon used.

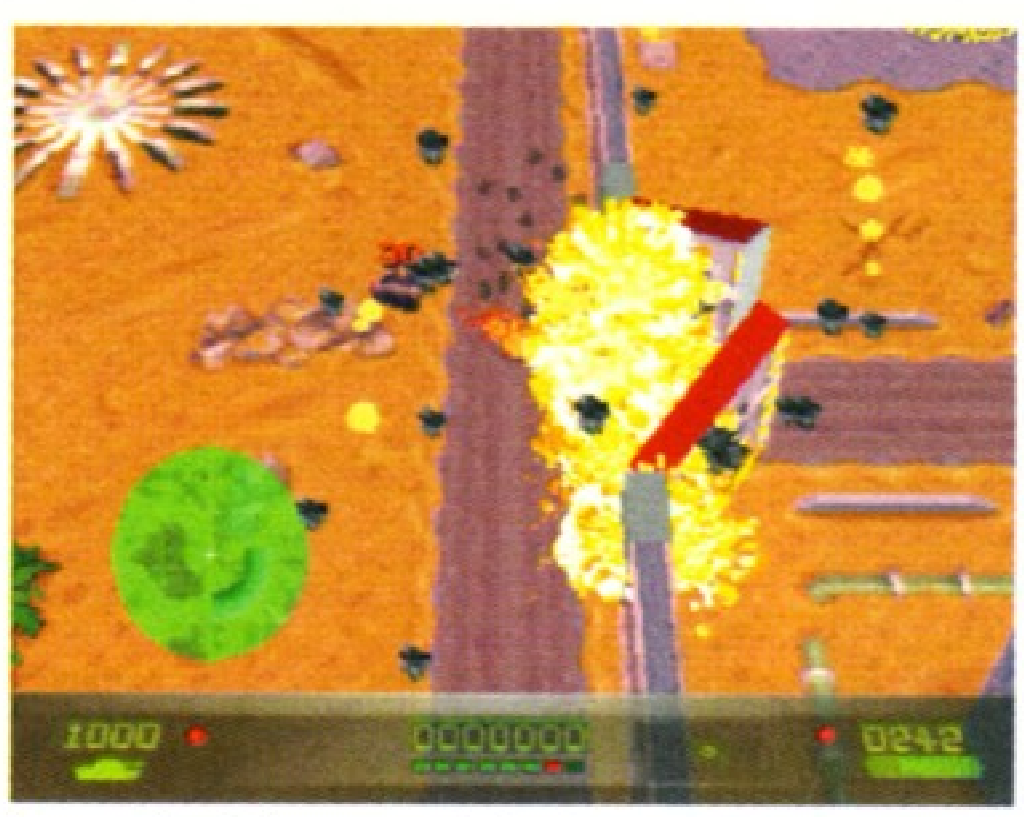
Of course, your rampant sortie through the enemy terrain isn't without incident. You're very likely to meet a whole host of enemy tanks and foot soldiers intent on blasting you into oblivion. You're also going to have to deal with some natural hazards - your tank can survive underwater for a short

A tank game based around total, rampant destruction

Mass Destruction looks like being a most amusing game indeed



Here you can see the tank's flamethrower at work.



Armour-plated doors pose absolutely no problem.



Your tank doesn't really like being submerged in water.



It's a good thing that most of the mission objectives involve torching everything in sight, otherwise you'd be in real trouble...









WEAPONS OF DESTRUCTION!

When it comes to weapons, your tanks are pretty well decked out. Pressing the A button cycles through the various artillery you've got packed into your tank, with the C button letting loose a round. In terms of actual weaponry... well, you name it, it's there. Mines are pretty cool, but of far more use are the various forms of missile you've got in your arsenal (the best being the homing missile). These produce some pretty spectacular explosions. Should you run out of ammo, you can always trust your cannon to do the job.





Aha... this'll be the mission briefing screen eh?



Oooh, that's a good one.



Frying tonight. Indeed.



Explosions on a desert landscape. Cool.





time, so traversing rivers and suchlike can get pretty dangerous.

Originally a PC title, Mass Destruction has converted extremely well on to the Saturn. As you can see from the screenshots, the game has a very simple look to it, but yet (and at the same time), when you see Mass Destruction in action you can't help but be impressed at the fluidity of the game along with the impressive conflagrations when a meanie or building buys the farm. There are also some nice special effects as well, most notably a reflective river with a bridge spanning it. Nice.

At this stage in development, Mass Destruction looks very promising. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has only had a small play-test session on a two-level demo version of the game which was pretty limited. With loads more levels added and progressively more interesting challenges and missions, Mass Destruction could well turn out to be one of those "sleeper hits" we keep hearing about. At this time, just about all of the hard work in getting the game engine across is complete - it's just a case of adding in those extra missions.

We should have a more complete version of the game in the SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE offices next month, so stay tuned, as the saying goes.



TANK TOP TITILLATION

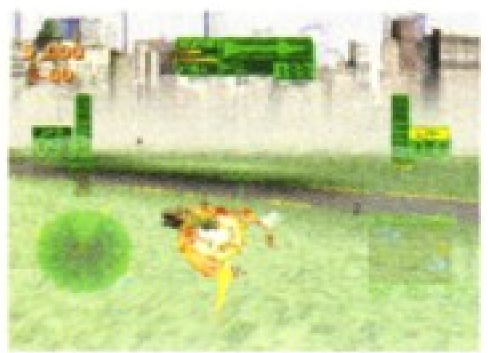
Just like a real tank, the turret of your trusty vehicle can be spun around independently of the bottom section. This is achieved by using the shoulder buttons on the joypad. Using this, it's possible to fire in one direction whilst travelling in another. On the two-level demo we've played, this isn't that useful, although we daresay that on the final game where there's going to be a whole lot more going on it could well be the difference between life and death.



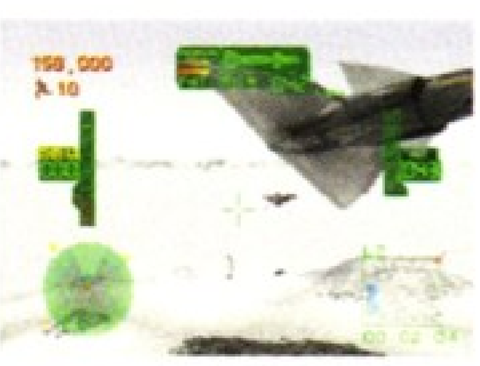
BLACK DAWN

Blood! Sweat! Shrapnel! Flying body parts! Just another day in Dave Kelsall's toilet. Meanwhile, in another of the world's war zones, a lone chopper pilot is treating some drug dealers to an invigorating dose of napalm...

BY	VIRGIN
PRICE	TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	MARCH

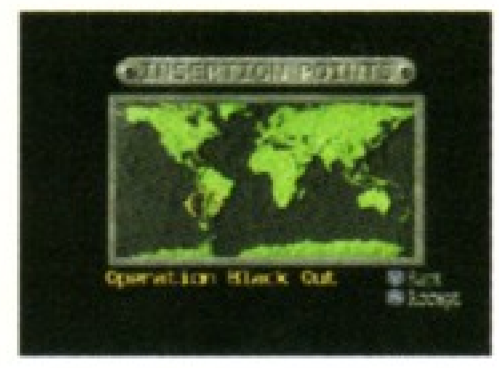








"Lock-on baby! I'm getting a hard-on!" Once again Oz Browne's prize quotation comes to light.


It has often been recorded that, while the collapse of Communism in the former Soviet Union might have seemed like a good idea at the time, it has proved a major inconvenience for creators of action movies and video games. With no dirty Commies left to shoot, and all those Hellfire missiles going spare, a new target was required. Fortunately, cash-crazed drug dealers and Middle Eastern terrorist organisations were ready to gamely spring into the breach, and thus the entire shoot 'em up industry was saved for us all. Cheers lads!

US developers, Black Ops also owe these 'social misfits' a debt of gratitude because without them there'd be nothing for us to shoot at in their new helicopter combat simulation, Black Dawn.



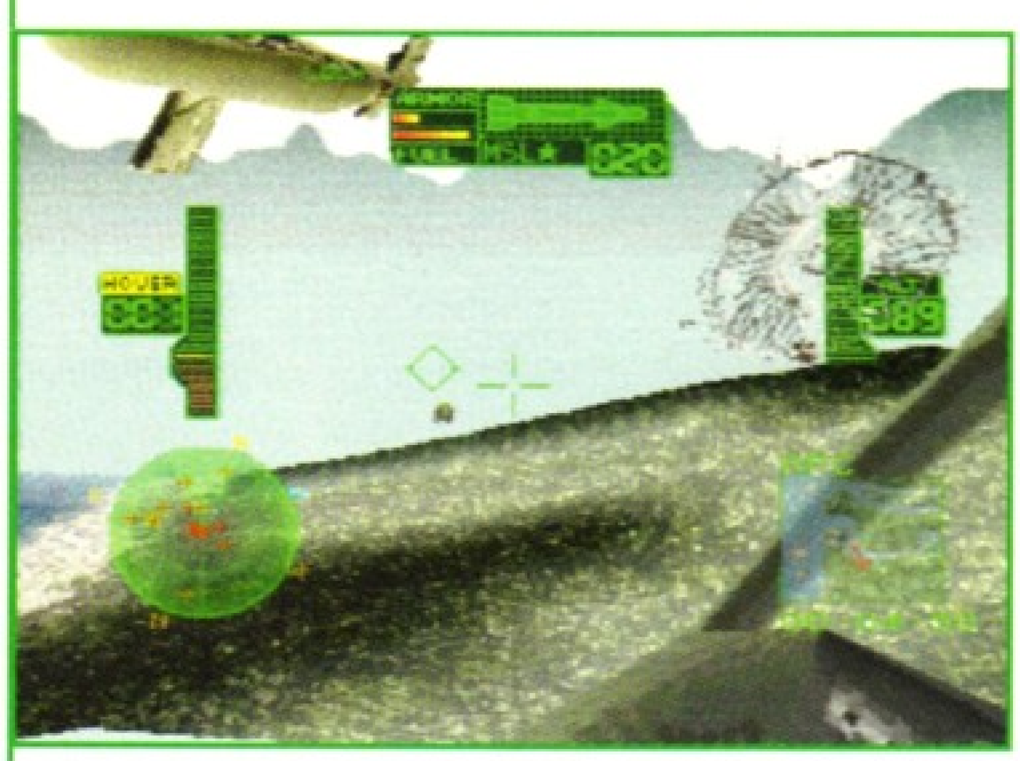
The sequel to the PlayStation hit, Agile Warrior, this game sends you on 28 massed-megalomaniac-mashing missions in eight of the world's trouble spots. Your simple Saturn controller gives you the power to pilot the AH-69 Avenger, a chubby little attack helicopter that bristles with cannons, high-powered missiles and tactical nuclear weapons. Chubby and little it may be, but when the time comes for attacking, destroying, escorting, rescuing and defending, there's no better danger-craft.

For your first mission, you're sent to New York's fashionable Central Park which has been cap-

VIEW TO A KILL

In true 3D simulation style, Black Dawn is replete with different camera angles that give you different perspectives on the action. They all look pretty cool, but you'll probably find that some are more useful than others.

Although Agile Warrior never made it to the Saturn, Virgin have seen fit to release its sequel, Black Dawn to the Sega machine!



Looking out of the left of the cockpit...



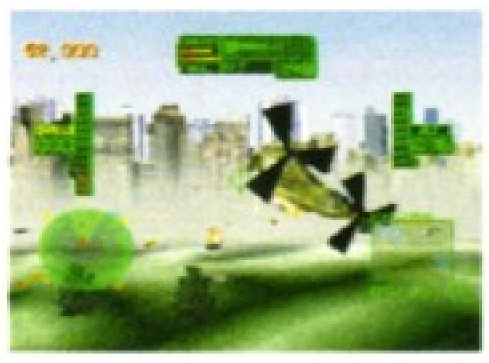
Here we staring straight out ahead.



And obviously this is the right perspective. Fascinating.




Some more air-to-air action being revealed in these luvverly screenshots.


Plenty of enemy helicopters crop up. Gun them all down like stinking peeegs!

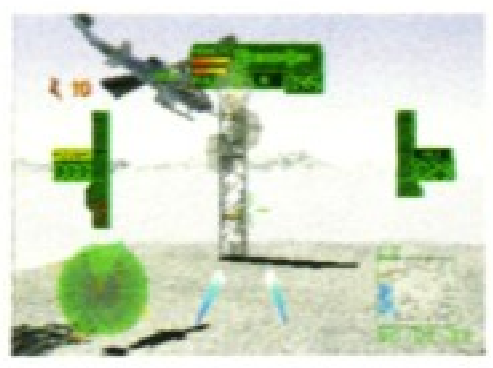





Missile away! You're doomed now, mister!



A bit of low-flying here, obviously.



Take out that target!

THE HELICOPTER PAD

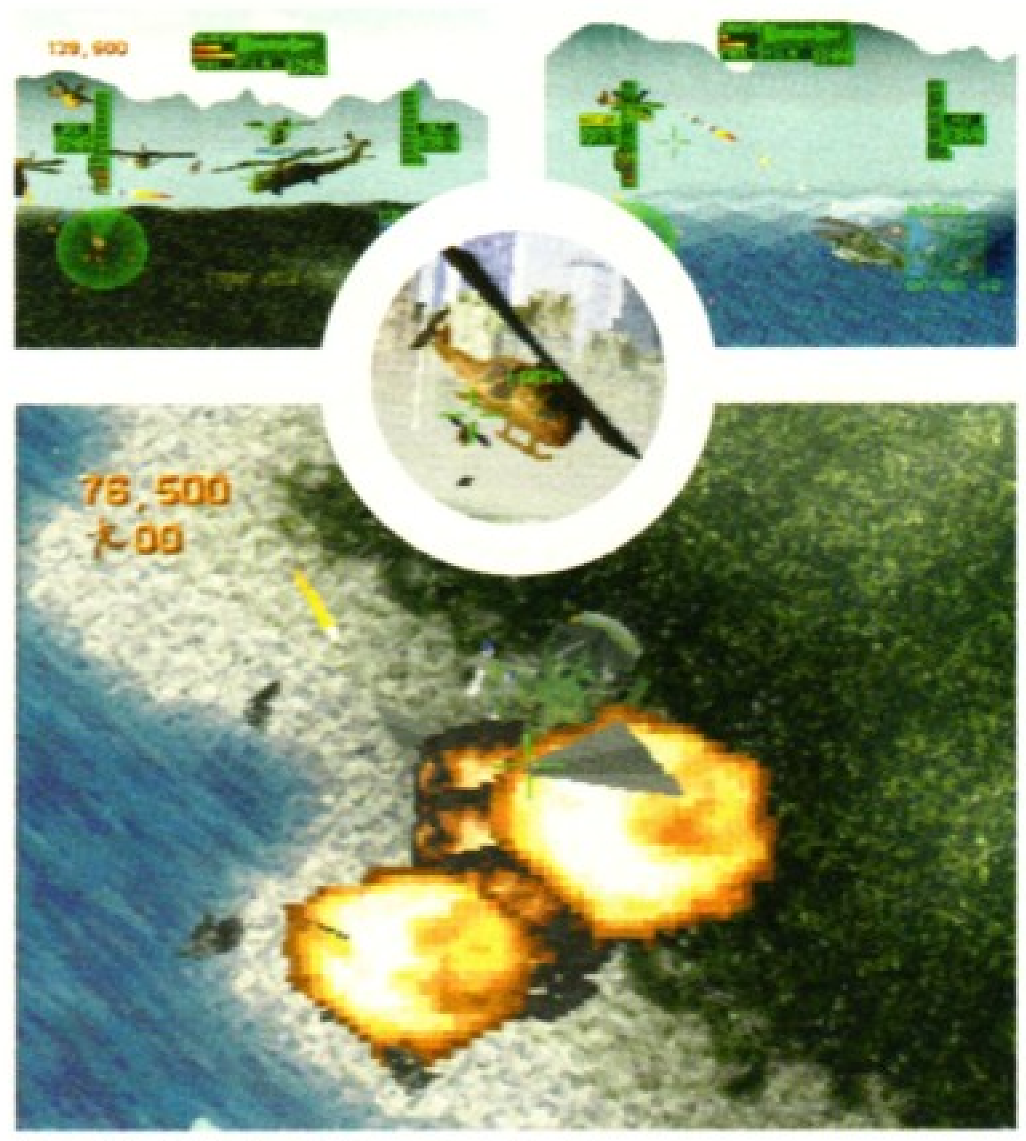
If you've ever tried it you'll know that flying a real helicopter is tricky work – you could say it's almost like driving two cars at once, one of which is a flying car! To give Black Dawn an extra element of realism Black Ops have made the controls as comprehensive as possible, but cramming them all onto the eight buttons and D-pad of a Saturn controller has made for some complicated key combinations that may prove somewhat befuddling for new players. Fortunately Black Ops have also included two alternative control variations, one of which is biased towards making the control of the chopper easier, while the other is attuned to giving better access to your weapons. Our brief preview playtest seemed to reveal that all three were as complicated as each other, but a bit more practice and we'll probably have worked them out. Don't you worry.



tured by Hez Bollah terrorists armed with stolen artillery. Your first priority is to rescue eight of the terrorists' hostages who have slipped their bonds and are running to the edge of the park with a battalion of hijacked tanks hard on their heels. With the hostages delivered safely to the local kidnap crisis centre, you have to give those terrorists a good seeing-to by first demolishing their mobile early-warning radar vehicles, then knocking out the howitzers that they're using to bombard the island of Manhattan, home to numerous celebrities who have a lot of connections uptown.

Stealth is as much a part of this game as mindless carnage, and rather than storming straight into a warzone it's best to use the long-range sensing powers of your radar to spot targets well before they spot you and then proceed slowly, taking them on a couple at a time. Steer clear of unnecessary targets too – destroying them will only waste ammunition, fuel and time and in some missions you're working against time and an ever-diminishing fuel supply. Luckily, smashed foes release extra ammo, fuel and armour which you can collect and use in the name of truth and righteousness.

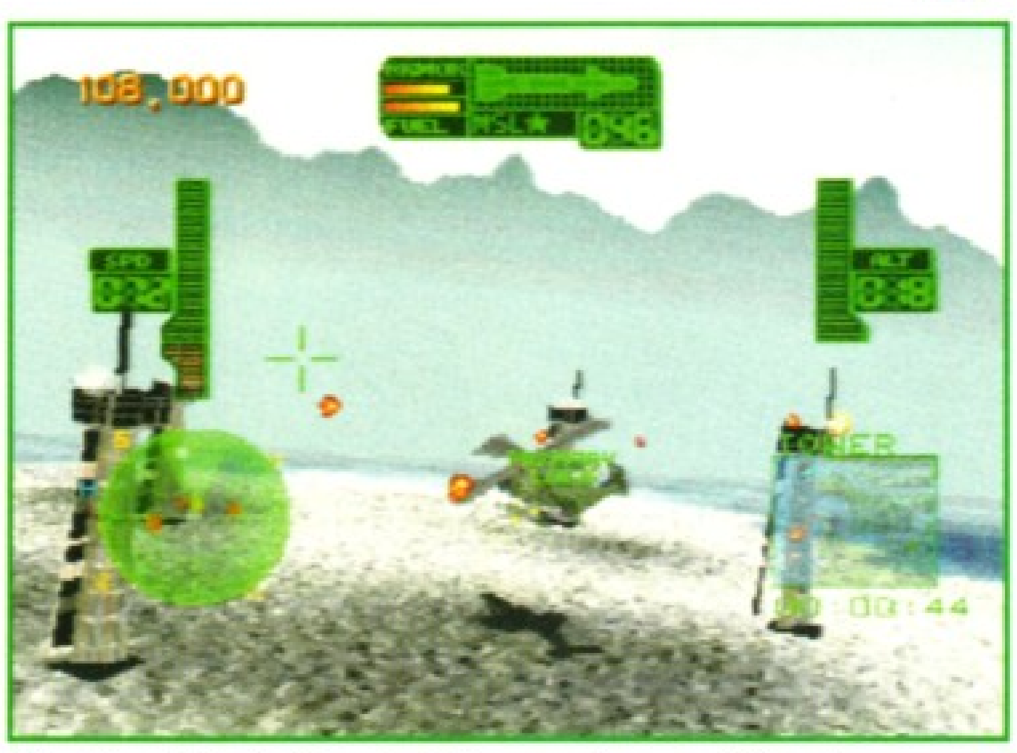
The Black Dawn preview disc only arrived in the SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE office a few days before we went to press so we've only had a brief opportunity to play it, but we're quite impressed by what we've seen of it so far. The 3D graphics are looking great, with minimal pop-up thanks to the use of that handy 3D game programmer's tool, the mist effect. Also impressive is the way that a realistic helicopter simulationy feel has been incorporated into the hardcore arcade blasting mayhem. The question that's doubtless on your drool-coated lips, though, is, "Can this be any better than Core's Thunderhawk II: Firestorm?". Well, for that information you're going to have to wait till next month, when we'll be giving Black Dawn the full SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE review 'treatment'. Look forward to it!



Boom! And they're history. And dead too.



This is the perspective of your wingman.



This Chase View is from behind your chopper. Obviously.



The best view is the unobstructed forward view.

PREVIEW

SWAGMAN



Fresh from the success of the mighty Tomb Raider, Core Design are BACK. This time they've gone back to their roots, producing their first 2D game for many a year.

BY	CORE
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	ARCADE ADVENTURE
RELEASE	MARCH





METAMORPHOSIS

Playing two poncey kids is how Swagman starts out, but Zack and Hannah are not really up to the rigours of the Terrortries, Swagman's fantasy lands hiding his nightmare legions. When access to these is obtained, the kids use their dreamdew to turn into Dreambeasts, transforming them into monstrous fire-breathing mutations of themselves. The Terrortries are designed to tax the better gamesplayer, who flits between them and the sub-levels of the kids' house. As the game goes on, the Terrortries begin to dominate, making the game more intense.



The many developments of Core Design are familiar to SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, but it's only since the success of Tomb Raider that the Derby developer (part of the Eidos group) has started to attract the coverage it deserves. Swagman is in line with Core's newly found diversity in ideas, being the company's first 2D game since Chuck Rock II, three years back.



Swagman has also had one of the longest gestation periods of any Saturn game; three years the team have struggled to bring all their gameplay ideas and graphics ideas to life. The initially devised the plot - two children, Zack and Hannah, are plagued by nightmares, really the work of the Swagman, an evil dream creature. To protect them, there has always been the dreamflight, a swarm of magical flies that use dreamdew to counter Swagman's evil magic.

But Swagman has systematically trapped the Dreamflight, to leave no antidote to his nightmares and a route into the waking world possible. The children must rescue the nine flies of the dreamflight, each trapped on a separate level of a sprawling arcade-adventure map.

The plot seems uncomfortably resonant of Sega's NiGHTS, but Swagman's team are quick to deny any charge of plagiarism, indeed they had the idea first. Actually, they don't care much for NiGHTS, dismissing it as a 'great demo'. They see Swagman as being more productive in terms of gameplay. Hmmm, the views expressed in SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE are not always those of the publisher...

The games that do inspire Swagman are Zelda and Zombies, two hits of the 16-bit era. Swagman matches Nintendo's Zelda in terms of size, with complex multi-level scrolling maps, and the challenge of the game is to find and use objects that will open up new areas of these levels. However, the player makes his ways through levels progressively, not back and forth, unlike Zelda and more in line with Konami's Zombies, a great plan-view shoot 'em up. Core would be happy if Swagman could catch the intensity as much as the style and atmosphere of Zombies. Let's hope they succeed.



The toilet is the basis for much English humour, so it's no surprise to see it in a British game...





NIGHT ON THE TILES

Making a 2D game may seem passé, but for Swagman's team it has been a headache, precisely because the 32-bit machines are so well supported as 2D machines. It's also been a mammoth task to design graphics sets for all the different sorts of environments they wanted to include. Instead of creating repeated polygon-textured environments, Swagman uses an intricate 2D tile map editor to alter the graphics on a screen by screen basis, but the designers think it gives Swagman a constantly changing, refreshing appeal.

HE MAKES THE SONGS

Currently scoring the last four tracks for Swagman is Nathan McCree, one of Core's two musicians and the acclaimed composer of Tomb Raider soundtrack. Swagman proposes to have more of these atmospheric, symphonic soundscapes in the background, and fit in with the inspirations behind the Swagman mythos - the dark, weird works of film director Tim Burton (Beetlejuice, Batman, Nightmare before Christmas). So in theory we should be expecting great things eh?



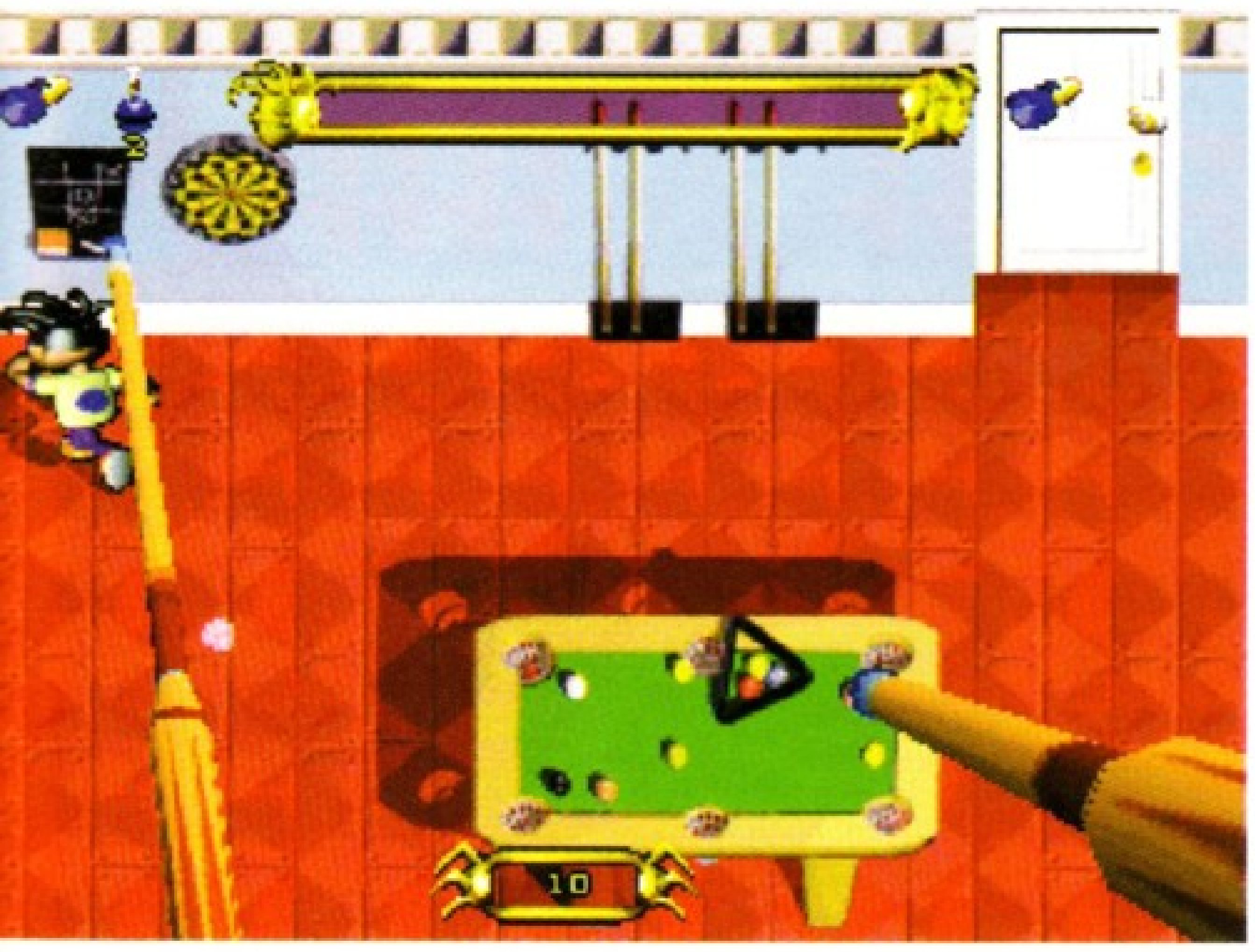
Although 2D, Swagman definitely has a very interesting graphical style, as can be seen in these screenshots. The Saturn's 2D powers are unrivalled, so this should look very cool.













Plenty more Swagman pics for you to drool over... As you can see, Core Design have certainly put a lot of effort into giving the game a definite style of its own. This game has been in development since the 32X was announced and is finally nearing completion. Expect a review in the next issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, if all goes to plan.

VIVA DOMESTOS

Bugs play a strategic part in the gameplay, adding to your problems beyond locating the Dreamflight. Apparently, Zack has a collection of insects skilled in all kinds of acrobatics, including bridging. These skills need to be employed at various points throughout the game, and a requisite number of bugs found on that level are needed, turning Swagman into a Bug Hunt.



TORICO

What's this? An FMV adventure full of magic and mystery that tells the story of a lost man who seeks his lost past in a world where the wind only blows every four years? Why, yes it is. How clever of you. Now here are the rest of the details.

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£39.99
STYLE	ADVENTURE
RELEASE	MARCH



Tattoos are always bad news aren't they? You have 'I LUV MUM' indelibly inscribed on your forearm, then you remember that you are actually a new species of genetically-engineered human that was grown in a giant test tube and therefore have no mother in the traditional sense. How embarrassing! What are going to say if a policeman ever asks you about it, eh? How will you ever marry into decent society with such a curse?



As it happens, Fred, the hero of Torico, has just as much trouble with his tattoo. It wouldn't have been such a big deal if he'd had a giant, full-colour Chinese dragon drawn from buttocks to shoulder blades. At least he could have covered it with a shirt. But no. Instead he finds himself with an ornate crescent design slap bang in the middle of his forehead. And, as is usual with these things, he has no substantial memory of how it got there.

Unfortunately, Fred's tattoo attracts the unwelcome attentions of some decidedly sinister individuals when he wakes up one morning in the Misty Town jail. Fortunately, his cellmate seems more eccentric than perverted, and rather than attacking him in that way in which no man should be attacked, he gives him the key to the cell door.

By stepping outside, however, Fred is stepping into the dogmess of fate. As he tries to escape the town's twisty streets he meets a man who first knuckles him in the kidneys, then drags his unconscious form before the local headman, Lord Gordon. Gordon quizzes Fred on the nature of his tattoo, which apparently marks him as a one-time visitor to the City of the Moons. Apparently, one trip to the City

Who'd have thought that having a tattoo could lead a person into an adventure full of magic, mystery and... MURDURRRR!

TORICO'S FOREBEARS

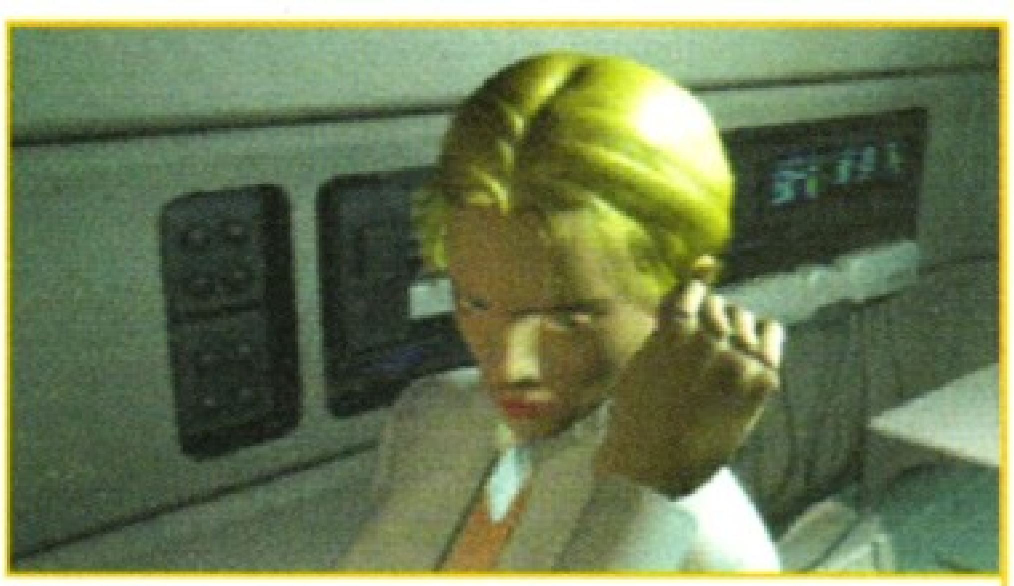
In the past 'FMV RPG' have been six letters that spelled 'iffy game' to many Saturn owners. Has this genre finally matured into something worthwhile? Will Torico be an improvement over its predecessors? Which, in case you were wondering, were...



Mansion of Hidden Souls - Explore a spooky house infested by butterflies which contain the souls of the dead. Duff graphics, duff story, duff atmosphere. Duff.

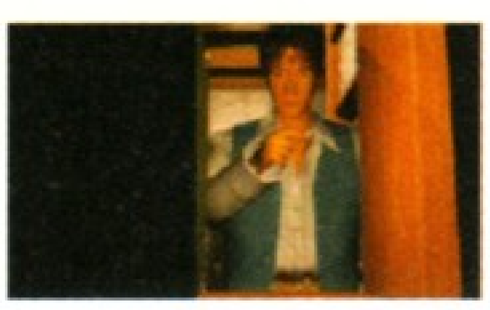


D's Diner - Much gory murder and psychic intrigue in this thriller from Acclaim. A step on from Mansion, this one looked and played better, though the voice acting was ropey.



Enemy Zero - A sci-fi quest that mixes rendered movie action with real-time Doom-style blasting. Sega haven't released this one isn't out yet, but from what we've seen it should be cool.

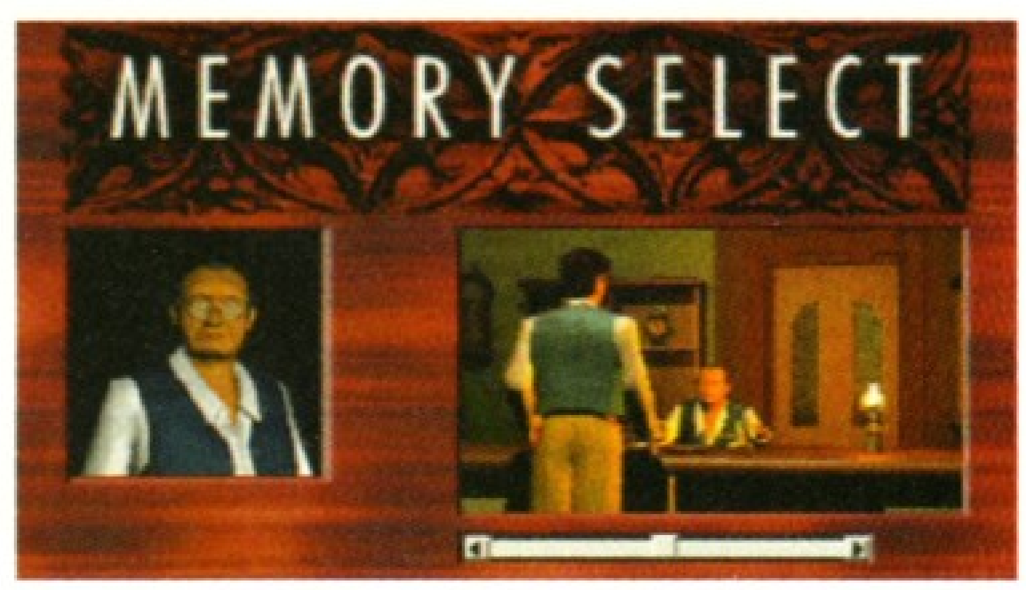






Fred finds one of those Scooby Doo bookcases. A quick shove and, hey presto, there's a secret compartment containing a key.





Use the Memory facility to search past conversations for clues.



Gordon's palace. Quite scary, and very sparsely furnished.



Placing a flower on a lonely grave has a supernatural effect! Could that be the ghost of Louisa?







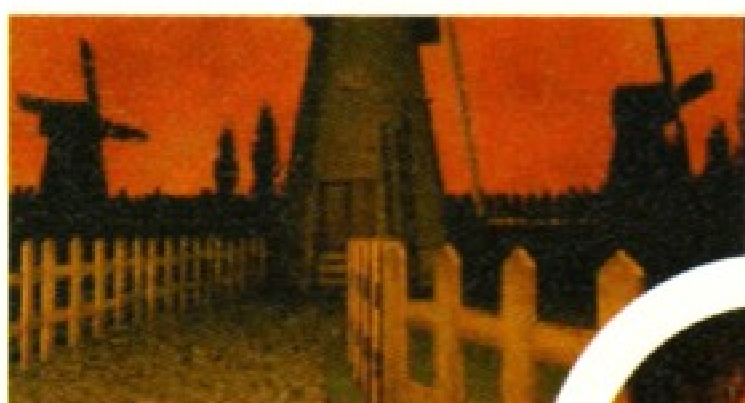










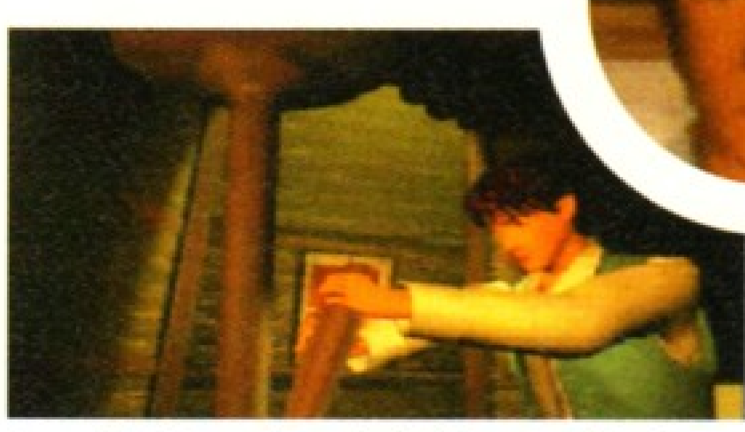


The windmills of Fred's mind.





A rope ladder in the windmill.



Hmm. An interesting windmill-controlling lever.



Hmm. The rope ladder appears to be crap.

The streets of Misty Town are pretty quiet, but behind every front door there's someone who has something ambiguous yet significant to say.

of the Moons is all you need to be set up with eternal life, so Gordon, twisted megalomaniac that he is, is quite keen on discovering its location. If Fred can't tell him, his own eternal life capabilities will be tested to destruction at the hands of Gordon's violent buddies. And with Fred's memory being what it is... well, it's not looking good for our boy.

All this sets the stage for a full-motion video adventure in which the hapless Fred walks the pre-rendered streets of Misty Town in search of some clue as to how he lost his memory and someone who can give him directions to the City of the Moons. At first, all doors are closed to the mysterious stranger, but he soon makes friends with some of the locals and discovers that there is something strangely coincidental about the period of time four years ago. At the same time Fred was losing his memory, Louisa, the town beauty, spurned the love of Lord Gordon and mysteriously 'disappeared'. And strangely enough, that was around about the time when the wind stopped blowing in Misty Town. Hmmm... Intriguing. This being an adventure game, of course, all such coincidences are significant.

This being an adventure game you'll be wanting some puzzles, an' all, most likely. From what we've seen of the first part of the game, these take the form of finding an object then finding the person who wants it in the hope that they'll give you another object that someone else wants. We're assured, though, that by the time you've progressed to the Torico's second disc (yep it's a double-CD game) this simple barter fun is exchanged for more in-depth problem-solving.

So will Torico be the first classic FMV RPG on the Saturn? Or will its Japanese origins make it so unintelligible to the Western brain that it would be better named, as our spelling-check software keeps insisting, 'Turkey'. Find out the full adventurous truth in next month's review!

THE CAST

You'll meet a host of people in Torico, some of them nice, some of them nasty, some of them a bit mad, all of them with the lovely smooth complexions of pre-rendered characters. These people also exhibit the speech patterns of someone whose brain works in Japanese, but whose mouth translates every word into a strangely stilted dialect of English as it's spoken.

FRED - The Tattooed One. Ask him if he remembers who won the World Cup four years ago and he'll be completely stumped.



LORD GORDON - He's been nasty and miserable ever since the lovely Louisa gave him the elbow four years ago.



JADE - Gordon's henchman. Pops up occasionally to give you non-cryptic clues and punch Fred in the gut.



THE WOMAN - Gordon's henchwoman (we didn't catch her name). Not the sort of girl you'd take home to the folks.



LOUISA - Lovely (but dead) ex-sweetheart of Lord Gordon. Appears to Fred in a glittering ghostly form.



LOUISA'S DAD - Devoted father, who still hasn't got over her daughter's death, judging by the way he rambles on.



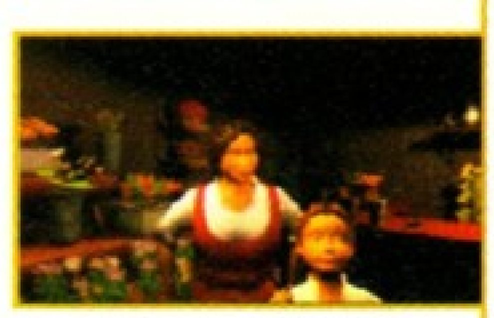
ANTHONY - Bald man with mystical powers. Collects butterflies because they contain the souls of the dead.



DR MORSE - Gordon's personal physician. Has a poor bedside manner ("Get out of my surgery" sums it up).



ROSE AND HAL - The mother-and-son who run the flower shop. Pleasant, but the kid's a pain in the arse.



MAC - A clockmaker who, apparently, has no respect for a man who has no respect for time. Another madman, then.



PREVIEW

LOST VIKINGS 2: NORSE BY

Rape? Pillage? No thanks, mate! All these dishevelled Scandinavians need is a platform-puzzle scenario and they'll be happy for hours. Clearly those cheap history books lied.

BY	INTERPLAY
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	PLATFORM PUZZLER
RELEASE	MARCH

A RECIPE FOR DISASTER

The witch's teleportation spell requires precisely the correct ingredients and any minor discrepancy can mis-teleport one of the Vikings to the wrong place. When this happens the remaining Norsemen have to manage on their own until they find someone else to help out. A new member in the gang brings a new range of abilities. Fang the Werewolf, for example, can leap and cling to walls, allowing him to climb sheer rock faces with ease, and his sharp claws let him shred any foes who cross his path. Scorch the Dragon, meanwhile is a great one for flying around and breathing balls of fire that reduce his enemies to ashes. Thrilling!





It would appear that the Lost Vikings are still lost, judging by the hilarious knockabout activities of Norse by Norsewest.





Nowhere in the Great Grimoire of Games Design does it say, "If thou wishest thy platform-puzzle game to enjoy great critical acclaim, thou shouldst use Vikings as the main characters." Or at least it doesn't say that in our copy. Interplay must have a later edition, though because this is exactly the plan they followed when they brought out Lost Vikings on the SNES and Megadrive, and everyone loved the pants off it. Having found the magic formula, Interplay are giving it another go on the 32-bit formats, with Beam Software doing the programming and installing a host of new features while they're on.

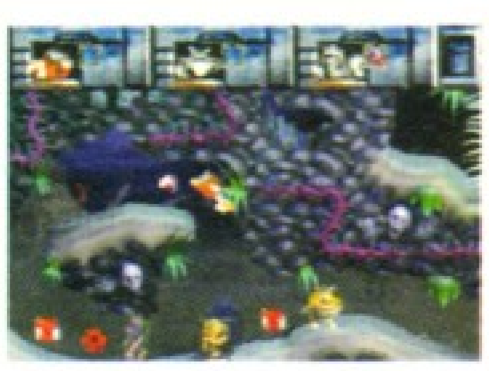
The sequel starts as our three heroic Norsemen are sailing back home after escaping the dread clutches of the sinister alien known as Tomater. How upset they must feel when, within sight of land, they feel that familiar tingle of the teleporter beam and they disappear into thin air. Olaf, Erik and Baleog rematerialise in Tomater's spacecraft and after listening to his megalomaniac banter for a while they manage to escape. But before they can return to their longship, oafish Olaf, the really stupid, fat, food-crazed one who can't read mistakenly presses a button that transports all three of them to a distant point in the space-time continuum.

The boys are distracted from their immediate urge to beat Olaf to Scandinavian pulp by the more pressing concern of once again having to find their way back home. They find themselves in ancient Transylvania, and a nearby witch informs them that she has a short-range teleportation spell that will take them part of the way back to Tomater's spacecraft, but she needs three magic ingredients to make the spell.

So, the Vikings have to spend each level hunting around levels full of platforms, locked gates and ravenous monsters looking for these three ingredients then they have to getting them back to the witch's cauldron. Actually finding the ingredients isn't so dif-

After their first 16-bit adventure the Lost Vikings are back! Their zany antics are conceptually similar to their activities in the first game











Just like the first Lost Vikings game, you have multiple vikings at your control, each with their own capabilities.



Although we've previewed Norse by Norsewest, the game is totally complete and will be fully reviewed in the next edition of SSM! Let us be merry!

PREVIEW

NORSEWEST











ficult – it's the getting to them that's the problem. The Vikings all have their own special abilities, but none of them can manage the task on their own. It's only by pooling their talents and working together that they can triumph. There's a lesson for us all there – if only we're smart enough to see it. Needless to say, if one of the trio succumbs to the perils of savage supernatural creatures or pits of flame during a level, there's no chance of completing it. Fortunately, Freya, Goddess of Friday is around for emergency reincarnations, so you can always have another go.

Once the ingredients have been found and mixed into the spell, the Vikings are transported to the next of the game's 31 levels. The levels are spread over five different worlds and from Transylvania our boys travel to a land populated by belligerent pirates, and after that they find themselves in treacherous jungle terrain.

We actually received our finished copy of Lost Vikings 2 too late for review in this issue of SSM, but from what we've seen of it so far, this has every chance of repeating the success of its fore-runner. Improved graphics (all the characters and scenery are ray-traced models this time) and a host of brain-mashing puzzles make this a game to watch out for! Review next month, Viking-lovers!



Fascinating activities abound in this curious picture.



Aha... so that's that sorted out then. Intriguing.



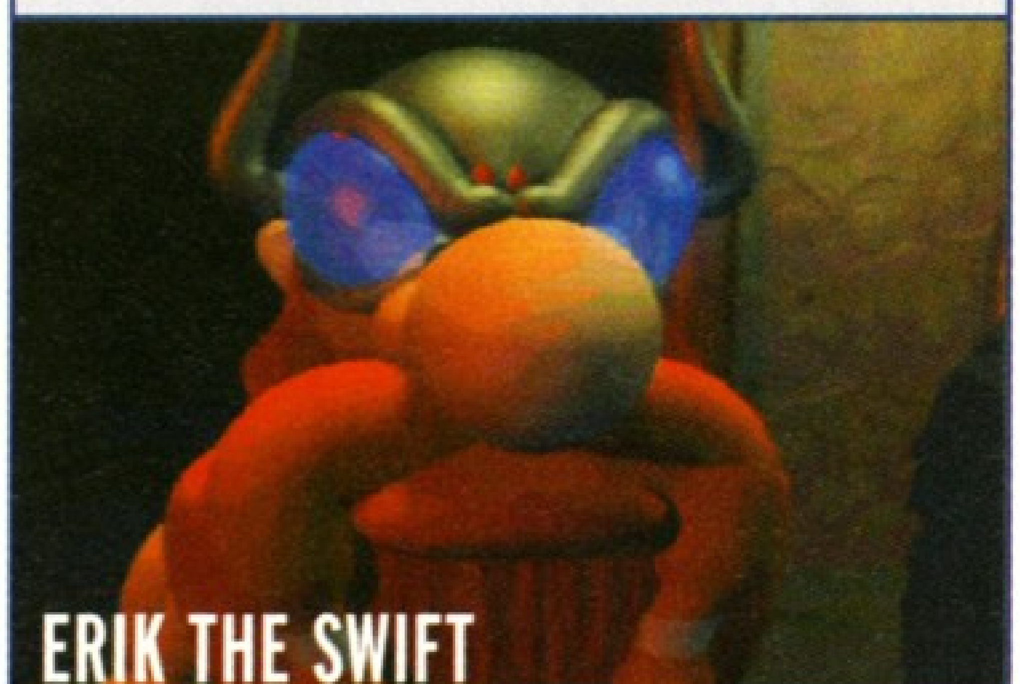
As you can see there's a fair bit of variety in the levels.



The brain-rending puzzles get tougher and tougher.

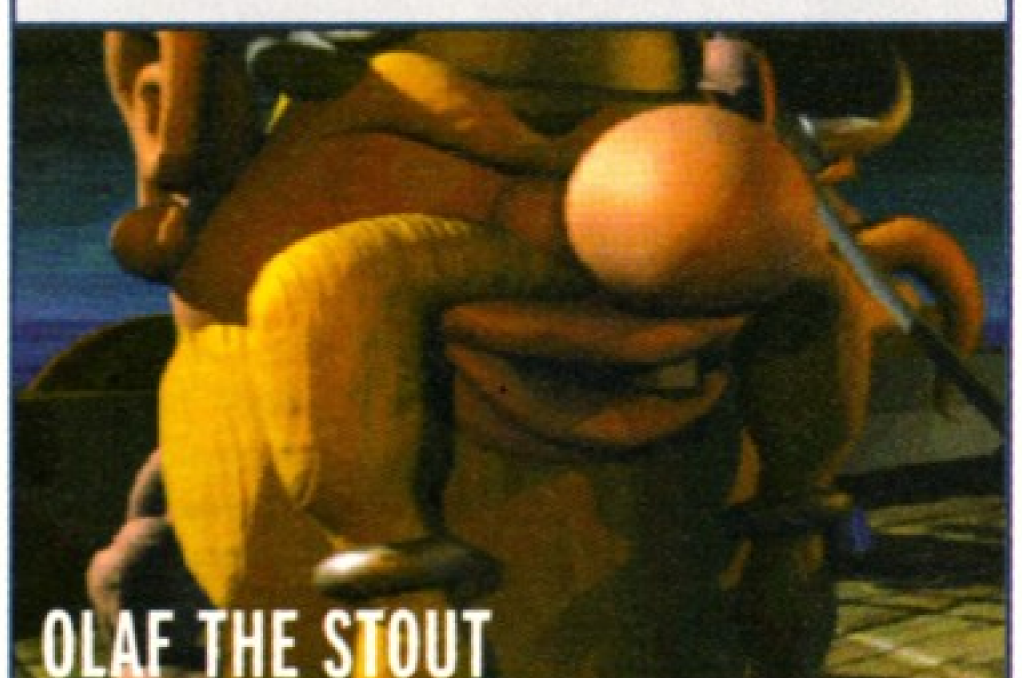
THOSE VIKINGS IN FULL

As in the original game, each of the Vikings has his own special abilities and tools. Some of the skills are the same as in the first game, but a few spare parts blagged from Tomater's ship at the start of the adventure give the boys some saucy new powers!



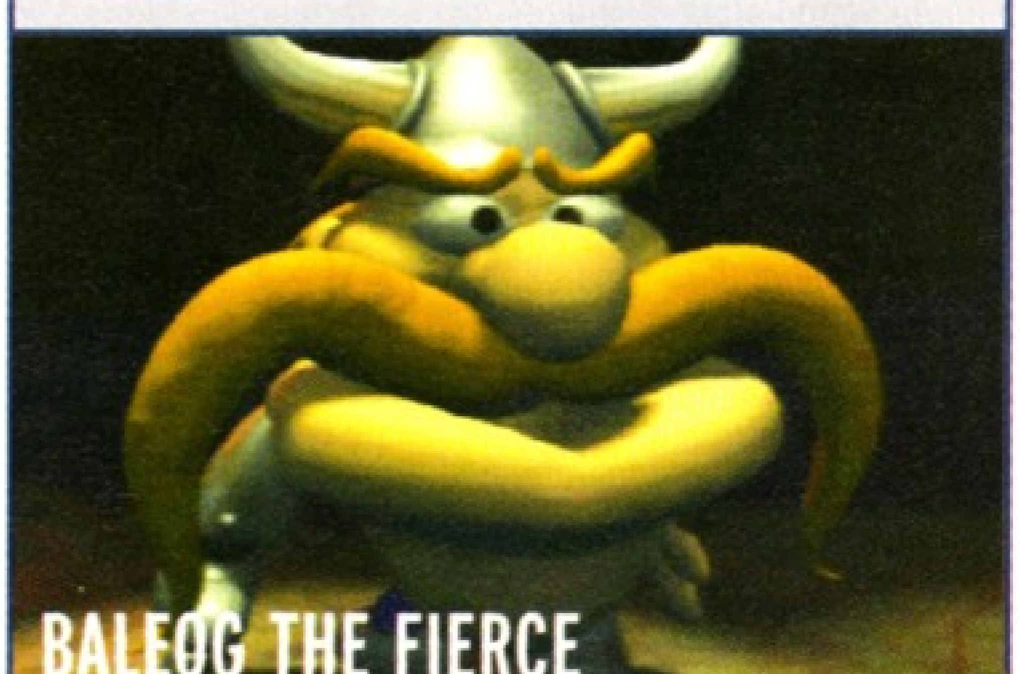
ERIK THE SWIFT

The athletic member of the trio. Erik can run fast enough to charge down walls. With the aid of his new rocket boots he can jump high enough to knock down weak ceilings and by the power of his magic helmet he can swim great distances without coming up for air.



OLAF THE STOUT

Olaf's shield doubles as projectile protection and parachute, and with his thunderous new fart power to provide thrust he can even use it to make short flights across the scenery. The shield also allows him to shrink.



BALEOG THE FIERCE

Baleog is Mr Weapons, using a stolen energy sabre for short-range defence, and a bionic arm for more distant targets. The bionic arm is also useful for grabbing unreachable items, and swinging across chasms a la Bionic Commando.

letters™

Greetings, pretty ones! The hour is once again upon us when we place a virgin mail sack on the skull-studded SSM altar, slice open its soft, polythene hide and remove the still-beating envelopes as a sacrifice to our ancient and terrible gods! But the appetites of the gods can never be sated and forever are we damned to seek new letters with which to placate them! Pretty ones, you are our only hope! Send your letters to us before the decline of the next lunar cycle or this world will be levelled by a mighty thunderbolt! Already the storm clouds gather over yonder mountains! Write, pretty ones! Write with all your biro-strength, to THE MAILBAG OF PAGAN DANCING, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.

SATURN BACKLASH... BACKLASHED!!

Before Christmas, SSM was deluged with letters from Saturn owners concerned that the PlayStation was leaving their machines behind. Should they sell up and switch sides? "No!" is the emphatic reply from our readers...

Dear SSM,
I had to write this letter in response to the letters of Mikey T and Chris Nightingale. I have many friends who go on about this PlayStation vs Saturn thing and the N64 that is supposedly going to mash up my Saturn. But when they come around and play on my 'Black Beauty' they never want to leave! And that's when I remind them about the PlayStations and N64s they're supposed to be getting! And I also take this opportunity to remind them what's still to come to Saturn. They never have any comment, just that now customary nod of respect.
Many a person has been converted after playing the Saturn at my place. You (and anyone else who thinks so negatively) would be mugs to sell up.

Rick Corbin, Plumstead

Dear SSM,
I am concerned about these letters from Saturn owners who are disgruntled with Sega. Why? Why? Why? With the exception of WipEout 2097 how many games are there on the Sony that are actually worth forking out £40 or £50 for? I own six Saturn-exclusive games (as well as games available for both machines) and SFA2 and DarkStalkers are far superior on the Saturn.

Peter Coombes, Brockham, Surrey

Dear SSM,
A year ago I wanted to buy a new console. For me there was only one choice – the PlayStation was obviously the better machine. Everyone was talking about it and the quality of the initial software was much better than the Saturn's. Then games like Tekken 2 and WipEout 2097 came out and only seemed to prove the PlayStation was better – or so I thought.

Two months ago I sold my PlayStation and bought a Saturn. Oh, I took some stick from friends but once I had played on my nephew's Saturn I realised that although graphically the PlayStation sometimes has the edge, the Saturn has the best gameplay.

Sega Rally is the best racing game on any machine. I've owned Ridge Racer and Formula 1 and they don't even come close to the gameplay of Sega Rally. Also VF2 is the best fighting game. I owned Tekken 2 and for me the Sega game is better.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not here to slag off the PlayStation. It's a great machine, but so is the Saturn. I bought a PlayStation because everyone else was. I was taken in by the hype, but I really feel that graphically the PlayStation has peaked while the Saturn gets stronger after every game.
Let me finish by saying to all the dejected Saturn owners, you can't play the Sega arcade conversions on the PlayStation. And believe me, most PlayStation owners envy you for that.
Keep the faith.

Paul Burrows, Dagenham, Essex



Sega Rally is better than Formula One (and everything else too), according to Paul Barrows.

And with that, Paul Burrows hits the nail on the head. The message is clear – Saturn owners have plenty to look forward to that PlayStation owners don't, so let's all be happy with what we've got. This correspondence is now closed – SO NO MORE PLAYSTATION LETTERS, OK?

CHRISTMAS NIGHTS OF ANGUISH

Dear SSM,
I feel I must put pen to paper about Christmas NiGHTS.

I have had a Sega console in my house for the last five years and last year I spent over £300 on games for the Saturn. Before Christmas I got Virtua Cop 2 and Fighting Vipers and when I bought the games I asked for my copy of Christmas NiGHTS and the shop assistant told me they didn't have it. I have since found out that if I had gone a further two miles into Leeds city centre and bought my games there I would have got it. This is stupid.



Christmas NiGHTS: great if you can find it.

I phoned Sega in London to find out how to get a copy of Christmas NiGHTS and was practically told, "Tough, it's not our problem". Well, I've got news for you Sega, it is your problem if people can't get it. I can hardly take my games back for a refund so that I can buy them again in some other shop that uses a different wholesaler.

I feel Sega have let me down over this. I have NiGHTS and was looking forward to Christmas NiGHTS, but it now looks like we will never get to see it.

Mr Stephen Crump, Tinshill, Leeds

Dear SSM,
About Christmas NiGHTS. I heard about it in October and immediately started drooling. However, no matter how hard I tried I just couldn't get my hands on it! I couldn't find any shops that 'did the offer'. The shops where I bought Daytona CCE and Virtua Cop 2 in December wouldn't give me it, and it looked like my last hope of getting it was via your subscriptions offer. However my Mum wouldn't give me the money to order your magazine, leaving me without Christmas NiGHTS.
Is there any way I could get it? Please, I'm willing to pay money for it!

Andrew O'Flaherty, Maghull, Merseyside

There's little we can do in this situation apart from offer some sort of apology. Still, perhaps it is too easy to blame Sega. They tried to do their best by shipping out the CDs to the retailers and from what we can see there has been a combination of there simply not being enough to go

around alongwith what can only be described as greed by some shops. We would have liked to have covermounted it, but it just couldn't be done.

VIRTUA TEDIUM

DEAR SSM,

Are we the only ones out there who are getting really fed up with all the crap 3D beat 'em ups that are being slung at us left, right and centre? VF1 – played through this rushed trash and binned it after a day, I think it was the fast action and brilliant moves that kept us glued to the screen... NOT! Virtua Fighter Remix – same tedious gameplay, new graphics... BORING! Virtua Fighter 2 – two new characters, same old CRAP!! Fighting Vipers – deja vu? VF Kids, VF3, Last Bronx... the list goes on and on and on. Wow, what a treat Fighters MegaMix will be, can't wait for this one, it's sure to be as riveting as the others. Is this all Sega think we want from our next generation consoles?

Don't get us wrong, we think Sega's the best. But there's still a lot of good games being produced out there that are not as over-hyped as the VF genre but are better games, eg. X-Men COTA, UMK3 and Guardian Heroes. Not only do these games look better, they also play much better with fast action and superb special moves. We can't believe X-Men didn't get the rating it deserved – all you cared about was the poxy borders. Last time we checked, the size of the borders didn't affect the gameplay (*I bet you'd change your mind if you saw the Jap version - Rich*).

Were you on something when you decided to give VF2 97%? Having previously owned the game we found it certainly didn't live up to all the hype it was given. We were very disappointed with the game and the most it deserves is 60%, whereas a game like X-Men, with 100 times better playability should get at least 96%. We're not saying all 3D games are rubbish – we really rate Athlete Kings, Virtual On, Tomb Raider and the Die Hard arcade game – but we feel that most these 3D games are too slow and have very short lifespans.

Is there anyone out there who agrees with us? Out yourselves NOW!!

Alex Charles and David Medcalf, Luton, Beds.

You have "outed" yourself all right, revealing yourself to be a gibbering, drooling fool devoid of taste and intelligence. AM2 put years of development into these games which are acclaimed the world over and you dismiss them as "BORING!". Begone or I shall crush you like a bug for this outrageous insolence! Oh, hold on... what's this?



AM-POO?

DEAR SSM,

This is not a slag-down letter, but the AM Departments aren't as good as you make them out to be. I mean their conversions are excellent, they really try their best, but sometimes they convert games that are almost identical to the last one they converted. For instance, Virtual On is no different to the Virtua Fighter series really, and the new Daytona, granted it looks good but they've changed the game engine which I think is a big mistake.

Gareth Morgan, Halstead, Essex.

The AM departments effectively invented the 3D beat 'em up when they came up with the original Virtua Fighter coin-op, and the reason they keep producing follow-ups is that gamers worldwide are constantly clamouring for more of the same. Having said that, the AM teams have produced plenty of world-beating arcade games which AREN'T fighting games – how about the Virtua Cops 1&2, Virtua Racing, Daytona USA, Sega Rally, OutRun, Afterburner II, Space Harrier – all of them classic Sega titles which set new standards in their day!

By the way, if you think Virtual On is no different to Virtua Fighter you're probably not playing it right. Mind you, you're probably right about Daytona CCE. But that didn't issue forth from any AM department, instead being handled by one of Sega of Japan's CS teams.

CLASH OF THE SATURNS

DEAR SSM,

I am feeling a bit depressed because everyone I know has a Sega Saturn, but I have a Sega Saturn 2 and one of my friends says it's made of cheaper chips and is crap compared to the original Saturn. He's absolutely mad about computers and has a NES, a Super NES, a Jaguar, a Saturn and a Megadrive 2 and he thinks he knows it all. Could I have your comment?

Kurt Martin, Birmingham

Clearly this friend of yours is a leading exponent of low-grade jive-talking. The second-edition Saturns have all the power of the original machines, but in a more compact design. Also, the newer Saturns come packaged with the Japanese controllers which are much more responsive than the old joypads that your mate's still curling his simian paws around. Anyway, how clever can he be if he bought a Jaguar?

JONNY COLLINS

DEAR SSM,

My name is Jonny Collins and I am rock solid to say the least. Therefore I believe it is in Sega's interests to model one of their next Virtua Fighter characters on me as I am rock hard. Forget Peter Andrea and his mysterious girl – I'm the ultimate male with the ultimate six-pack.

Believe me, the character would be rock solid.

And remember BRUSSELS EQUALS MUSSELS. Please think about it or I'll throttle ya.

Jonny Collins, London, E5.

Oh, Jonny Collins – you're a daft arse! And you know what you can do with your six-pack.

I AM KID RETRO!

DEAR SSM,

It's occurred to me, with all manner of arcade companies such as Namco, Irem, Sega, Taito, Williams and whoever else releasing retro compilations of their old classics, why don't Capcom do the same? They could release all their old games from Commando, Ghosts N' Goblins and Street Fighter up until Final Fight and SFII (the original). I for one would love to play arcade conversions of Strider and a three-player Mercs that makes use of the six-player adaptor. It's a pretty exciting thought. Maybe a lot of other people are interested and I'm sure there are a lot of Capcom fans out there.

Carl Mason, Doncaster

There are some dissenting voices in the games biz who think that this whole retro thing is a pointless waste of time, but being veteran gamers who've been playing since the year dot, we must admit to being quite into the idea. Sega Ages brought back many a happy memory, and we agree that a Capcom Museum compilation would be just as good! Final Fight and Strider would go down well with Master Richard, but we'd rather see Ghouls N' Ghosts than Ghosts N' Goblins. How about it, Capcom? Do you hear the cries of your public?

THE HALKIDES LONGSHOT

DEAR SSM,

This is a longshot, but I think Sega should take Worldwide Soccer and change it from national sides to club sides. It should include a Division One league and a Premiership League. The top three in Division One go up at the end of a season and the bottom three in the Premiership go down. Also to make the gameplay even better. The top three teams in the Premiership, should enter a European Championship at the end of a season. And instead of just playing league or cup, a season option should be included, with cup fixtures included in the league schedule. I just feel this would be the best footie game ever. Think about it.

Mike Halkides, Waterlooville

That is a bit of a longshot, Mike. For one thing, Saturn games are localised to the whole of Europe, not to Britain specifically. How would our French pen-pals feel if they had to play as West Ham United instead of Paris Saint-Germaine or Marseilles Wanderers? And how well would such a game go down with our brethren north of the border if it didn't include any Scottish teams? It looks to us like you want to turn Worldwide Soccer into England-wide Soccer – a plan that, in the mind of any rational human, would brand you as an evil megalomaniac! Today Worldwide Soccer, tomorrow, the world! Say it ain't so, Mike! Say it ain't so!!

Q&A

Here we are again. More questions. More answers. And more insane ranting for our resident super-villain editor, Rich Leadbetter, aided and abetted by Sega Europe overfiend Mark Maslowicz. Test their combined inventive genius to the very limits of human endurance and send them your questions to... Q+A, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU Please be interesting.

A MAN IN PRAYER WRITES

To SSM,

I'm writing this letter to you and praying that you will print it. Thanks for your time.

1. Is the Arcade Racer worth buying because I've got a few racing games and I'm planning to get Manx TT?
2. I've heard a bit about Mystaria II being on the way. It this true and when will it be released?
3. I own all of your demo discs and the latest is the best. I'm obsessed with Daytona CCE. When will another disc be released?
4. Is Dark Savior like LandStalker and when will this be released?

James Buckley, Eckington.

1. The Arcade Racer isn't really essential - certainly not as essential as the NiGHTS analogue pad, which also works on all new driving games. 2. Hopefully around April/May - it still needs translating into English. 3. Hopefully in the next couple of months you should witness another one. And yes, it will be ace. 4. It is kind of like LandStalker, yes. It should be out as you read this.

PAY ATTENTION IN ENGLISH CLASS, PLEASE

Dear SSM,

Please can you print my letter. I have eight questions for you as I'm a BIG fan of your mag.

1. Can you please give us readers more demos with your magazine?
2. There is a gun game in the arcade called Gunblaster made by AM2. Is it coming to the Saturn and when?
3. Can you please have more than one tips page in your mag?
4. Can you please find tips for NiGHTS and Virtua Cop 2?
5. Can you give us a tips video with your mag?
6. Which system is more powerful: Saturn or PlayStation.
7. Is there going to be a Virtua Cop 3?
8. Can you please ask all of AM2 for their autographs because I'm a BIG fan?

Keep up the good work, your mag is excellent.

Simon Snow, Somewheresville, Arizona.

1. We're looking into it. But as we said, we're dedicated to quality discs as opposed to quantity. 2. No there isn't. You're probably referring to GunBlade by AM3, which is scheduled for Saturn, probably at the end of the year. 3. The 16 last issue should have sorted you out. 4. Issue #12 had a huge NiGHTS guide. As for Virtua Cop 2, look no further than this magazine! 5. No. It would be too expensive. CDs only for SSM. 6. Saturn matches PlayStation on everything bar some transparency and lighting effects. Saturn has more processing power and far superior 2D capabilities. 7. There has been no announcement, but it's a possibility. 8. No.

I AM TROUBLED

SSM.

Please answer my questions because I am troubled by them.

1. When will Marvel Super Heroes be out in the shops?
2. Will there be any wireless joysticks in the UK?
3. Which is the best, Marvel Super Heroes or X-Men versus Street Fighter?
4. Is it true that Namco's System 33 hardware (which is being used in Tekken 3) makes their games look and run better than anything from Sega?
5. Why are sales for Saturn so low?
6. When's the NetLink coming out and how much money will it cost?

Orlando Goodall, Devon

1. It won't be out in Japan for another few months, and probably won't get here until the summer. Sigh. 2. Unless a third party company produces them, no. In the past they have been notoriously crap any way. 3. Personally, we prefer MSH, but XMVSF is still a damn good game. 4. NO. Tekken 3 is running on what looks suspiciously like an enhanced version of their PlayStation System 11 board (which some have dubbed System 12). Its performance is nowhere near the same league as Model 2 - let alone Model 3! 5. As I mentioned last issue, rampant stupidity is rife the world over. Besides they're not low, they're just not as many as that other machine. 6. No fixed date, but sometime in '97 at around £200.



A lot of you are waiting for this one. So are we.

PRETTY LITTLE QUESTIONS

Dear SSM,

You've heard it all before, but could you be brave and answer these pretty little questions? Ta.

1. Will that lovely Snatcher ever come out on the Saturn?
2. Is it pretty damn likely that Sega will use an upgrade cart for VF3?
3. If they do, will it be a VF3 only thing or will it be an actual Saturn upgrade?
4. Do you prefer, or even like, the new handling on Daytona CCE?
5. Does the original car, when you get it, handle like the old game?

Ben Edgell, Hailsham

1. The sequel, Policenauts, has been touted for Saturn but is unlikely to appear over here. 2. Pretty damn likely, yes. 3. Probably an upgrade that will work with other games too. That's if there is an upgrade cart at all. 4. Definitely prefer old Daytona handling. Kind of like the new handling, but it's nowhere near as enjoyable. 5. Certainly not. The original car is like a super car, with maximum top speed, grip and acceleration.

I BEG YOU TO PRINT THIS LETTER

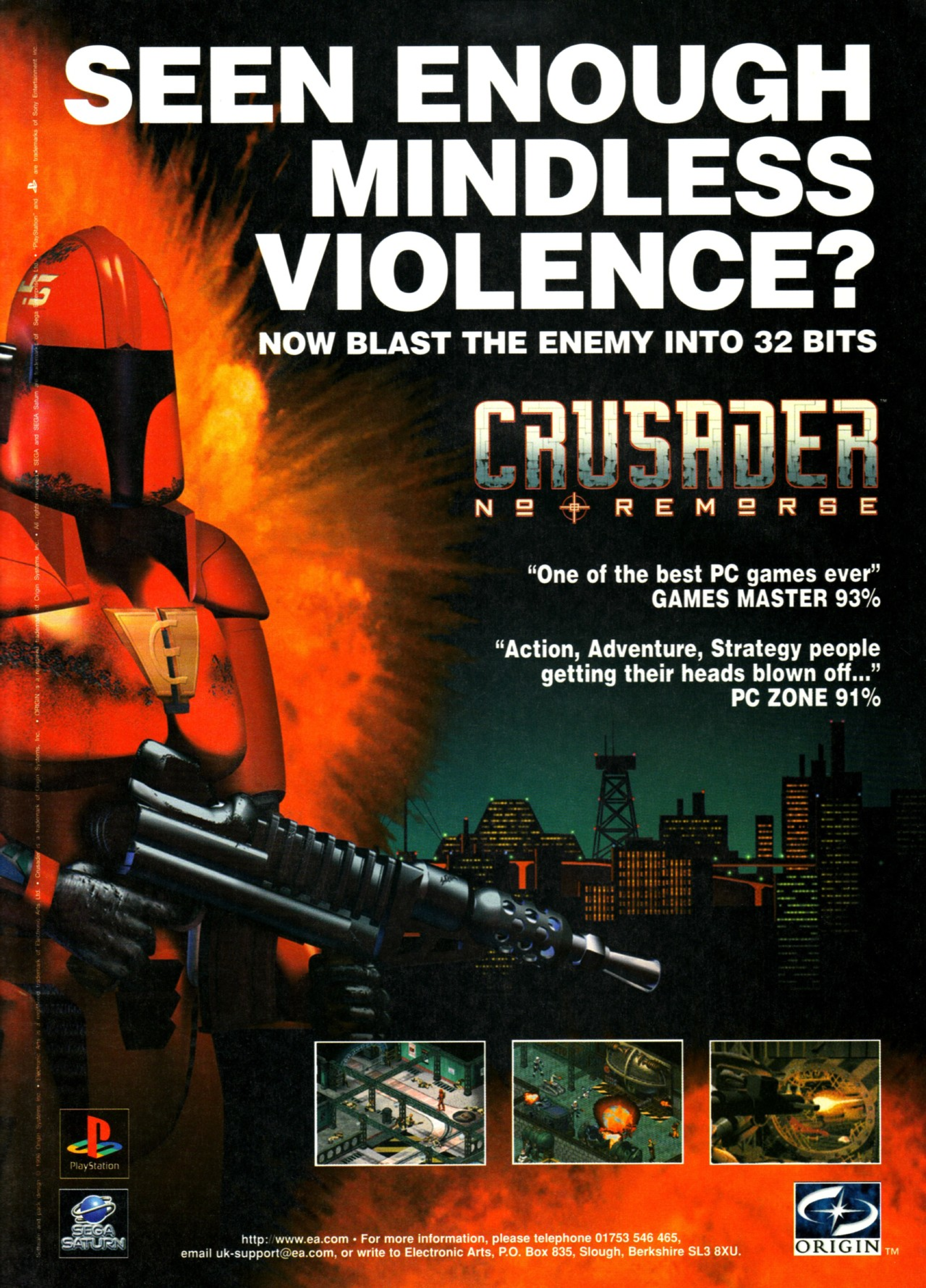
Dear SSM,

I've never written to a magazine before and I beg you to print this letter for you to answer some questions and settle a dispute which has been causing me to have sleepless nights.

1. I recently purchased a Saturn and some games. I'm astounded with the machine but my friends say it was a mistake and I should have bought a PlayStation. I also went to Curry's to look at some games where I overheard a shop assistant practically slagging off the Saturn to potential buyers, saying the PlayStation was better. Well, SSM, which is the better machine and why?
2. One of the games I bought was VF2. Is it worth exchanging this for Fighters MegaMix which is out soon, or wait for VF3 and stick with VF2...
3. Will there be a sequel to NiGHTS? If so, what is its release date? Is it worth waiting for or should I just get NiGHTS?
4. Are there any more racing games planned for Saturn of Sega Rally pedigree? Will WipEout 2097 come out? Will it be as good as the PlayStation version?
5. Do you think that Bug Too is Saturn's answer to Crash Bandicoot on PlayStation. Is it worth a look? Please, please answer these questions or I will send you a used loo brush from the toilets of a vindaloo takeaway...

HOFF-E, Somerset

1. If you're happy with the Saturn, fine. And so you should be as it has some of the greatest games ever for it. We're all getting a bit annoyed of these so-called expert shop assistants. As I said last issue, send names and branch locations of these shops and we shall endeavour to eliminate all those whose comments are an affront to Sega! As I said earlier, Saturn has some difficulty with some of the PlayStation's lighting and transparency effects, but it has more CPU processing power and far superior 2D capabilities. 2. Stick with VF2, but get MegaMix as well. Only consider getting rid of one of these when VF3 appears. 3. Whatever game comes next from the Sonic Team will be awesome, but you are a fool for not having NiGHTS at this moment! Buy it - it's one of the best games ever! 4. No news on WipEout 2097 (although it is likely to appear later in the year), but in the meantime I'm sure Manx TT SuperBike and Sega Touring Car Championship will sort you out. 5. Bug Too's pretty good, but you want NiGHTS, young man. NiGHTS, you hear me? N-I-G-H-T-S.


SEEN ENOUGH MINDLESS VIOLENCE?
NOW BLAST THE ENEMY INTO 32 BITS
CRUSADER
NO REMORSE
"One of the best PC games ever"
GAMES MASTER 93%
"Action, Adventure, Strategy people getting their heads blown off..."
PC ZONE 91%
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RED ALERT!



The tranquil setting of the botanical gardens soon gives way to a horrific bloodbath.



Between missions the crew like to relax at the local seaside resort. Make mine a ninety-nine.

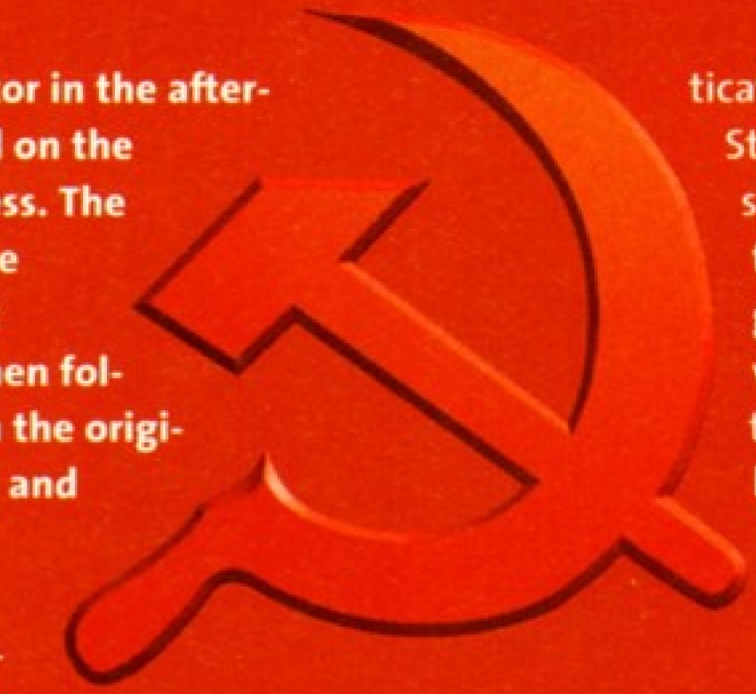


Destroy the radars first as it then limits the range and accuracy of the enemy weapons.



The tiny pink blob next to your chopper is a powerful Russian leader who needs rescuing.

After the success of the PlayStation version, an enhanced Soviet Strike finally makes its way to the Saturn in another shameless cash-in on current world political issues. LEE NUTTER takes a look at EA's premiere 32-bit blast-a-thon.



Way back in 1992, riding high on the feel good factor in the aftermath of the Gulf War, Desert Strike was released on the Megadrive and became a huge commercial success. The debut Strike game had many similarities with the conflict in the Gulf, a raving mad dictator, desert surroundings etc. and proved to be a controversial release. Then followed the sequel, Jungle Strike in 1993 which expanded upon the original gameplay by including a range of vehicles for you to pilot and was also a huge success.

The last 16-bit game in this massively popular series was Urban Strike in 1994 which was perhaps the most sophisticated Strike game of the lot. Then when we heard news of a 32-bit Strike game naturally we could barely contain ourselves. But in hindsight maybe we were expecting a bit too much from EA. To capture the feel of the previous Strikes yet bring it up to date with 32-bit graphics would be a tall order. But they've done it. Soviet Strike is a very worthy addition to the Strike series and it's going to sell big time. Why? Well take a look at this massive Showcase and you'll begin to see why as Soviet Strike boasts an impressive amount of new features and it looks great too! But still, enough of this meaningless ranting! Read on...

Soviet Strike is reviewed on Page 76.



After taking multiple hits from the destroyer your untimely death is inevitable.











You're about to descend to a watery grave.



Just so you know that this is actually based in Russia, the thoughtful programmers have included lots of those buildings with those funny roofs that look like upside down ice-cream cones. Quite what their purpose is I don't know, but then I'm a games writer and not an architect.



This level is a bit of sandy fest and in actual fact is set 40 miles north of the original Desert Strike. A useless but interesting fact.





THE ENEMY AT LARGE

"Zulus... fousands of 'em.....wait 'till you see the whites of their eyes lads...." If only it was that easy. Unfortunately for you the enemy you face in the latest installment of the Strike series are armed with slightly more than a spear and a grass skirt. They are sophisticated terrorists and as such have a vast array of highly lethal ex-Soviet army weaponry which pose a serious and very real threat to your wellbeing. These are scattered about over the five increasingly difficult levels often being concealed in buildings for the element of surprise. Amongst those likely to give you the biggest headaches are the following...



LT AAA. Armour: 50 Cannon: 5

These are the light anti-aircraft guns scattered about all over the place. They have poor accuracy but fire in rapid succession with each shot taking five points off your armour, so they're quite deadly when they hit. They're not particularly well armoured though, taking only a couple of Hydras to destroy them.



GASKIN. Armour: 75 Missile: 25

Gaskins are the fast, light surface-to-air missile vehicles which have this terrible habit of blasting you out of the sky. They can launch four powerful surface-to-air missiles each taking 25 armour points before slowly reloading. Their armour is not bad and take a total of three Hydra hits before they explode.



BRDM-2. Armour: 75 Machine Gun: 10

These are the reconnaissance vehicles which are fast and manoeuvrable with a 14.5mm heavy machine gun which takes 10 points off your armour with every hit. Their armour isn't particularly thick so are quite vulnerable and are destroyed with only three Hydras.

MISSION STATEMENT

To give you a good idea of the task you are undertaking when you load up Soviet Strike, here's a mission by mission breakdown of the first level and so not to spoil it for you a brief overview of the other levels. It is also important to note that various sub-missions will pop up from time to time in a random manner which divert you from the task at hand for a while.

LEVEL ONE: CRIMEA STRIKE

1. The first mission requires you to destroy the two early warning radar sites which will then allow you to fly into hostile airspace undetected. They are not particularly well defended with only a couple of light anti-aircraft guns surrounding them. Knock out the guns first leaving the radars vulnerable to attack.

2. During the course of mission one you are interrupted by a call for help from Strike agent and ace copilot Nick Arnold who, along with other intelligence agents has been taken hostage and are about to be executed. Break them out of the POW camp by taking out the four corner posts first, then take out the anti-aircraft guns and the BRDM-2 reconnaissance vehicles. You'll find Nick and the other agents in the various stone buildings in the camp. Time is of the essence in this one, so you'd better hurry.



3. Things start to get a bit more dangerous on mission three. Your task is to destroy the helicopters and buildings at the well protected temporary airfield. The helicopters are on the ground so pose no threat but the surface-to-air missile vehicle known as the Gaskin and the anti-aircraft guns do so watch yourself. Take out the guns first then the radar towers before attempting to destroy anything else. Watch out for the ZSU mobile air defence vehicles too as they are heavily armoured and pack quite a punch.



Inside the buildings are the US CIA, FBI and NBA POWs whom you must rescue to successfully complete the mission.

4. For the fourth mission you need to rescue 14 out of the 16 POWs who are being used Saddam-style as a human shield, and take them to one of the two landing zones in nearby forest clearings. Your armour is boosted considerably for each one you manage to retrieve. The best way to go about doing this is to drop your copilot off at the snow plough at the bottom of the southern POW camp. He then uses it to devastating effect to trample over screaming Commie soldiers making your task slightly easier. Take out the corner posts next and anti-aircraft guns before destroying the buildings and rescuing the hostages. You also need to rescue Nick at some point after he gets himself into some serious strife.

5. By now you are aware of the whereabouts of the ex-KGB headquarters where five Commanders are hiding out. Three of them need to be captured as they are carrying some vital mission information which is beaten out of them at a later date. Destroy the buildings they are in and catch them as they try to make their escape.



6. Mission six requires you to destroy the heavily fortified terrorist training camp wiping out all structures and vehicles. Begin by destroying the surface-to-air missile launchers and ZSU's, then taking out the power station disabling the local radar. Then proceed on in a shooting frenzy destroying whatever remains. Use caution though as the larger buildings usually contain some sort of vehicle with a big gun pointing in your general direction.



Underneath the big explosions is the snow plough which your co-pilot is driving through the enemy lines to great effect.



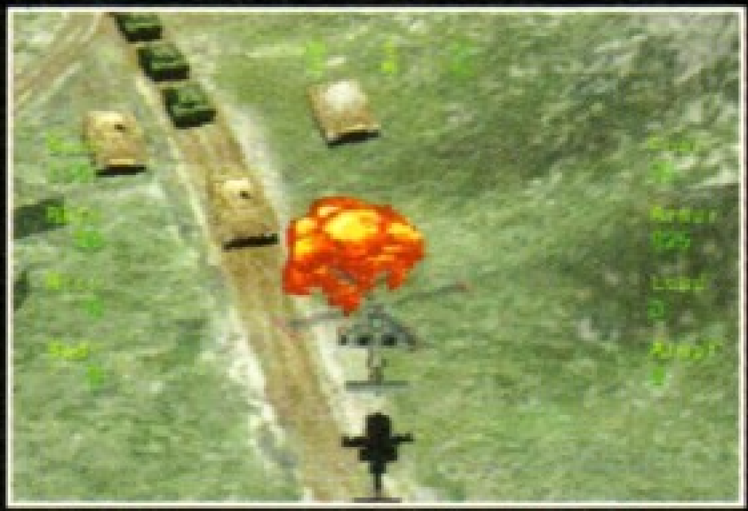


7. The final mission requires you to eavesdrop on the enemy villa and learn their plans. How you ask? Well Strike. net can pick up scrambled satellite communications when in the nearby vicinity. So fly around the perimeter of the villa and kill the enemy soldiers and destroy the Gaskins. Then fly over the villa itself and destroy the BMP armed troop carriers and the ZSU's. Proceed to the east of the villa and drop off your co-pilot who will then go into the villa and wire it to blow whilst you fend off yet further attacks. Don't stray too far though as once the building blows you'll need to pick up your co-pilot and get back to HQ in one piece to a hero's welcome.



BRDM-3. Armour: 75 Missile: 75

A modified version of the BRDM-2 scout car, the BRDM-3 is now fitted with powerful anti-tank and anti-helicopter missiles which each take 75 armour points off your Apache helicopter with every hit. Blast their ass with three Hydras or just a single Hellfire and watch them burn. Lovely.



BMP. Armour: 100 Missile: 25

This is the armoured troop carrier that has a powerful enough anti-aircraft missile to its credit but is highly inaccurate. It's use is to transport troops across rivers and can operate in a chemical battlefield. It has good armour which requires a Hellfire to penetrate and destroy it.



ZSU. Armour: 150 4 Guns: 5

You biggest headache on the first few levels is the ZSU or 'Zeus' as it is known to its friends which provides mobile air defences. It has thick armour needing a Hellfire and two Hydras to destroy it. It also has four 23mm gun barrels which fire in very rapid succession taking five points off your armour with every hit.



HVY AAA. Armour: 75 Gun: 5

The HVY AAA is the 57mm gun systems which utilise the heavily armoured gun shields if installed around a permanent facility. They are not particularly difficult to destroy and take only three Hydras to destroy them or if you are in a hurry you could use one of your deadly Hellfires.

LEVEL TWO: BLACK SEA STRIKE

The second level of Soviet Strike has you being deployed at the Sea of Asmov which adjoins the Black Sea. Your objective is simple, enter the naval base near the Black Sea and prevent the hijacking of a number of ex-Soviet ships and their nuclear ICBM's. To achieve this, you will find that most of this level will be spent destroying convoys, ships, submarines, radar sites etc. and recovering the ICBM's.







Look at those lighting effects, impressed eh?



Destroy the bridge to cut off their supplies.

LEVEL THREE: CASPIAN STRIKE

The third level believe or not actually takes place 40 miles north of the original Desert Strike at the Caucasus Mountain Passes. Your overall mission objective is to protect an ex-Soviet chemical weapons plant from being captured and used to kill us all. To this end you must destroy the advancing formations led by a certified genocidal maniac named Savak, whom eventually must meet his maker.



More Desert Strike style destructive antics.



Just look at them backgrounds! Lovely.

LEVEL FOUR: DRACULA STRIKE

We're off to Transylvania for the fourth level where a nuclear power plant which has been polluting the area for decades has been ruptured through an act of deliberate sabotage. So the Strike team joins the Green Welly Brigade in an attempt to deal with the nuclear reactor whilst performing a number of humanitarian missions too. These involve rescuing locals and scientists that have been brought in to deal with the problem.



More pollution. I feel sorry for the seagulls.



Destroying civilian houses is good fun.

LEVEL FIVE: KREMLIN STRIKE

Not to give too much away, the final level takes you to Moscow where Russian leaders have been trapped and are soon to be executed. Your objective is to prevent the military coup and ensure the wellbeing of democratic Russian leaders, among them Boris Yeltsin.



Excellent Moscow based mission action.



Russia looks very dull doesn't it?



Destroy the power plant so the terrorists can't use their electric blankets.



Shoot the drums because you may find Boris in there. Probably not though.



BTR-70. Armour: 100 Machine Gun: 10

This vehicle is capable of carrying a squad of infantry and has a 14.5mm heavy machine gun capable of targeting helicopters ie. you. It has good armour which takes one Hellfire to destroy and a powerful machine gun which takes 10 points off armour.



SPEEDBOAT. Armour: 50 Machine Gun: 10 SAMs: 75

The speedboats are quick and highly deadly with armaments ranging from machine guns to SAMs and even 20mm AAA guns. Get hit by one of the Surface to Air Missiles and it's going to hurt with each ridding you of 75 armour points. Destroy with two Hydras.



HIND. Armour: 150 Weapons: 25

These are highly dangerous enemy aircraft which should be approached only with extreme caution and a full compliment of ammo. It fires smart missiles very quickly, each taking 25 points off your armour in a short space of time. To eliminate this nightmare from the skies use a Hellfire and a couple of Hydras.



PT-76. Armour: 125 Gun: 25

This vehicle has light armour and a fairly inaccurate gun and is mostly used in coastal landings. Progress through to the desert level and you'll encounter loads of them. You have been warned. To destroy them and end their reign of terror use a Hellfire and a couple of Hydras. That'll sort it out.





NEW SATURN ONLY FEATURES

That's right, since the PlayStation version of Soviet Strike was launched in November of last year those guys at EA haven't been simply resting on their laurels. Oh no. They've been putting the finishing touches to the Saturn version which includes quite a long list of new features that have been added or improved over the PSX version. Don't believe me, eh? Well just take a quick gander at this list before pushing it in PlayStation owners' faces.

1. Not included in the PSX version is a new easy difficulty setting for novices to the Strike games or people who just can't be bothered to play it properly. This has the desirable effect of doubling your firepower and reducing fuel consumption by 25%.
2. The on-screen display with fuel, armour, lives etc. can be brightened or dimmed to make it clearer or less obvious. The choice is yours. Also there are not any annoying black backgrounds on the display.
3. New special weapons are hidden in a hard to find place on each level. The Super Chaingun gives you 450 rounds of duel cannon fun and there are Maverick Missiles which will blow up just about anything in the game.
4. The front end of the game has some pad illustrations and allows you four different button configurations.
5. The multi function display with the map is in a higher resolution in the Saturn version.
6. The compass on the Saturn version has actual numbered bearings.
7. One of the most important improvements which was lacking in the PSX version is that the cows moo when they are shot at.
8. The level passwords are in actual Russian to add to the authenticity.
9. The front end audio screen has better layout and better graphics.
10. In the Saturn version there is a stereo and mono setting available for those of you without a ridiculously expensive TV.
11. On the second level the sound effects have been added to the grounded helicopters to make them sound as if they are actually trying to take off.
12. The Saturn analogue pad is supported both in analogue and in digital mode. Another good reason to buy NiGHTS eh readers?
13. There are a FEW HUNDRED known bugs in the PSX version that have been fixed in the Saturn version.
14. The graphics have been improved on the Saturn version to give the enemy helicopters shadows on the ground.
15. The multi function display menu where the map can be found has been edited and cleaned up somewhat.
16. There are more "Sludge" areas in the fourth level that may be used as fuel, evening up the balance of the level.

YOUR CHOPPER

In the latest installment of the Strike series your helicopter remains pretty much the same as in the previous ones, a customised version of the Apache helicopter. However with your new enemy having the latest in high-tech weaponry at their disposal, your craft needed enhancing somewhat. As a result your Apache is now fully kitted out with eight sidewinders capable of destroying just about anything in the entire game as well as the usual chaingun, hydras and hellfires. Take a look at the damage you can do.







SIDEWINDERS

The new addition to your Apache helicopter, the sidewinders are capable of much more destruction than your other weapons taking 300 points off the enemy armour. However you only have eight of these per level as unfortunately they cannot be reloaded with the regular weapons so use sparingly. The explosions look rather nice too.





CHAINGUN

The chaingun is a tad on the wimpy side and is often referred to as "The Big Girl's Gun" for obvious reasons. It fires one shot after another in rapid succession with each shot taking only three points off the enemy's armour. It ought not to be used on its own against anything other than enemy soldiers due its relative ineffectiveness but can be used to destroy enemy buildings so as not to waste your limited supply of the more powerful weapons. A good strategy there, then.



T-55. Armour: 175 Turret Gun: 25

This tank was designed during World War Two by the Soviets who kept producing it until a decade ago. It has thick armour and takes quite a bit of blasting to put it out of action. Use a Hellfire and three Hydras to destroy it or if you have them it's probably easier and healthier to use two Hellfires.



SKAR. Armour: 150 Missile: 40

The SKAR is a most deadly rocket system which will blast you out of the sky given the opportunity with its powerful rockets. It has quite good armour too meaning that it will take a well aimed Hellfire and a couple of Hydras to put this one out of action for the foreseeable future.



GAINFUL. Armour: 150 Missile: 50

These mobile anti-aircraft missile systems are often located around radar dishes as this aids their accuracy and are capable of deadly firepower damaging your armour by 50 points. They do take a while to reload so hit them with a Hellfire and a couple of Hydras while they're busy doing that.



GANEF. Launcher: 75 Missile: 150

This long range anti-aircraft missile can be launched from a fixed site or a mobile launcher and is very dangerous when combined with a radar. Getting hit will cost you 150 points of armour so it doesn't come recommended. Use three Hydras or a Hellfire to destroy this weapon of mass destruction.



HYDRAS

Fire one of these rockets and the enemy's armour is depleted by 25 points, if you hit of course, so are obviously quite powerful. They are however in limited supply as you can only hold 38 of them so be careful not to waste them. Use them together with the chaingun to increase the destruction.





HELLFIRES

These aptly named missiles are the business taking 100 points of the enemy's armour which is enough to destroy most of them. Again though, you can only carry a small number of them or you'd never manage to get off the ground otherwise and as such only have 8 of them. Use only where necessary.

MAVERICK MISSILES

The second of the secret weapons is the maverick missiles which will blow up just about anything in the entire campaign. They are not particularly easy to find though and you only get 8 of them but they have awesome power.



SUPER CHAINGUN

The super chaingun is one of the two secret weapons that has been added to the Saturn version of Soviet Strike and is an enhanced version of the chaingun. Collecting this hard to find weapon provides your Apache with a dual cannon chain-gun twice as powerful as the regular chaingun and gives you 450 rounds to play with.











T-80. Armour: 200 Main Gun: 50 Machine Gun: 5

This is the best tank in the Russian army and your worst nightmare. It is capable of outrunning and outgunning just about anything NATO can throw at it, until now. This one will take two Hellfires to destroy but watch out for that main gun as it packs quite a punch.



BM-21. Armour: 50 1 Missile: 40 10 Missiles: 400

Read the statistics and weep. Get hit by four of these missiles even with full armour and you're toast. These rocket launchers have been around since World War Two and are highly dangerous but relatively easily destroyed with only a couple of Hydras.



HIP. Armour: 300 Rockets: 50

This helicopter has been in the Russian army for sometime and it's easy to see why with very thick armour and heavy weapons. However it has quite a slow rate of fire which is one of its few drawbacks. To shoot it down you'll need either three Hellfires or sixteen Hydras so you'd better be stocked up.



HAVOC. Armour: 300 Rockets: 75

The HAVOC is the latest in helicopter technology being heavier and with more horsepower than your Apache. In fact if we're talking specifications it makes your machine look like Budgie the helicopter. With its advanced fire control and heavy armour this bird poses a very real threat.


BISLEY ©95

THE HEX FACTOR!

After the horrible disappointment that was the Saturn rendition of Doom, GT Interactive are all set to redeem themselves with the imminent release of Hexen. Hence this particular showcase penned by RICH LEADBETTER.

I have to admit that when it comes to videogames from the id software stable of developers, I have a very particular interest. In fact, personally, id are just about the only coders inside the United States that have really earned my respect. Each of their games is a graphical masterpiece. Each of them offers something new in terms of gameplay. And all of them have gone down as classics in the annals of PC gaming.

Hexen is a game that was released on PC about 15 months ago. It used an enhanced version of the classic Doom engine to provide what was then state-of-the-art visuals. The corridor action of Doom was expanded to encompass different types of terrain, smashable windows, more background scenery and many more special effects. Enter Raven Software, an id associate. There's no doubting their supreme competence when it comes to adventure games, and combined with the id engine, you're guaranteed something special. And Hexen is indeed something quite special. In this showcase you'll get a whiff of just how particularly spiffy the improvements over Doom are. You'll also see just what kinds of creatures and weaponry await in this pretty decent game. So, any way, enough of this small talk. Onward!

Hexen is reviewed on page 66.







This particular cleric weapon is excellent – sapping enemy energy at close range, and dispatching green bolts at long range.

CHARACTER CLASSES

One of Hexen's best advantages over Doom (and even Quake) is the addition of three different character classes. At the beginning of the game, you choose the class of character you wish to be and this determines which weapons you get in the game. It should be noted that Weapon #4 of each character requires the collection of three separate parts before it can be used. As it is, the classes each have their own strengths and weaknesses, as you shall discover as you read on...

BARATUS



CLASS: FIGHTER
SPEED: 10
ARMOUR: 10
MAGIC: 1
STRENGTH: ?

NOTES: When it comes to sheer athleticism and power, you can't really get better than Baratus the Fighter. In terms of strength and power of attacks, this guy is in a class of his own. He's also "useful" in that he can run faster and jump higher than the other two classes. When it comes to use of mana, Baratus is also impressive, despite his crappy magical prowess. Three of his four weapons can be used without mana and the axe and hammer only use miniscule amounts of the mystical magical enemy. A powerful character indeed.

WEAPON #1: SPIKED GAUNTLETS

The most powerful base weapon, the fighter is able to dish out three punches in quick succession before a pause, making him able to dish out more damage than other characters using this level of weapon. The fighter has an easier time to begin with, obviously.



WEAPON #2: TIMON'S AXE

This has longer range than the gauntlets and is also over twice as powerful, making it a very decent weapon. It uses up two blue mana every time you use it - although the mana is only lost if you actually connect with a foe.



WEAPON #3: HAMMER OF RETRIBUTION

As a close range weapon, it's not that much more powerful than the axe, so it's best to use it as a long range weapon in conjunction with green mana. In its long range form, a green fireball is dished out which can take out multiple targets. The price? Three green mana, to you sir.



WEAPON #4: QUIETUS

This enormous great sword is the pride of the Fighter's arsenal, but its power comes at a cost. Press fire to loose off five powerful green fireballs which can annihilate a group of meanies up close or at range. It utilises 14 blue and 14 green mana.





At close range, the action gets pretty damn pyrotechnic! As you can see here...











You start the game with close-range weapons such as the gauntlets or the mace (pictured above). These are pretty unpowerful tools.

PARIUS



CLASS: CLERIC
SPEED: 7
ARMOUR: 8
MAGIC: 6
STRENGTH: 6

NOTES: As you would expect, Parius is the middle-man between the physical fighter and the magical mage. Among his strengths is his use of the flechettes. He drops them and they explode to envelop his foes in a poisonous gas cloud. Parius is also notable in that he has the best homing weapon - the Wraithverge. However, it's power comes at a price: namely 18 mana... of each colour! In multi-player mode, Parius tends to be the character of choice. Not that we'll find out without a link-up cable...

WEAPON #1: MACE OF CONTRITION

This is quite similar to the Spiked Gauntlets employed by the Fighter. Unfortunately, although the mace has a longer range, it isn't quite as powerful. On the plus side, you don't have the embarrassing pause after the third consecutive hit.



WEAPON #3: FIRESTORM

A powerful weapon that inflicts plenty of damage, the Firestorm sends a streak of fire hurtling along the floor. One problem is that it hugs the floor, so you can't fire it across gaps at your enemies. You get fairly good value out of the four green mana used to fire up this baby.



WEAPON #2: SERPENT STAFF

A most useful weapon. At close range, it hands you your enemy's lifeforce. At long range it fires off venomous green fireballs. On the plus side, it's easy on the mana, using just one dollop of blue mana every time you fire.



WEAPON #4: WRAITHVERGE

As mentioned above, this is the most powerful homing weapon in the game and also the costliest in terms of mana (18 of each colour). Ghosts shoot out that seek out and exterminate any targets in the area, circling around their prey. Impressive.



ALL-NEW ADDITIONS TO THE DOOM ENGINE!

Doom's 3D engine is pretty damn smart (on the PC at least) and the Saturn has its work cut out faithfully replicating what the PC version of Hexen achieves. Basically, the graphics have been taken to new levels with far more detail!

1. SWING DOORS

In Doom, doors simply went up and down. In Hexen, you get a whole bunch of swinging doors. Even crushing ones. There are even some turning door fireball-spewing death traps to contend with.



2. HUGE DROPS

In Doom, you could pretty much fall as far as you wanted without resulting in too much damage. Not so in Hexen, which features sheer drops which result in an inevitable death. Ooh. Handle with care, Hexenites!



3. LOOK UP AND DOWN

An enhancement made to Heretic (Hexen's PC predecessor), here you can look up and down to a limited degree. It's nowhere near as free as Quake, but it does come in handy for gauging the afore-mentioned sheer drops.



4. EXTRA DETAIL

The environs have been tarted up with far more sprites, such as trees and what-have-you, designed to make the landscapes look more interesting and realistic. And it works, too! The first level is particularly good...



DAEDOLON



CLASS: MAGE
SPEED: 4
ARMOUR: 2
MAGIC: 10
STRENGTH: 4

NOTES: Pretty weak in combat, Daedolon specialises in long range fighting, keeping his opponents away from his frail body. Although his attacks use up more mana than his comrades', Daedolon is correspondingly more powerful and he also has the advantage of having a fairly decent ranged weapon that uses no mana whatsoever. There's certainly something of an art to using Daedolon and taking him to his limits, and certainly he's the character which requires more than the skills you would have honed in Doom.

WEAPON #1: SAPPHIRE WAND

The weakness of this weapon is kind of made up for thanks to its long range powers, allowing you to take out foes from a distance. It's also notable in that the bolts pass through foes, so if there are a bunch of them in a row, they'll all be equally damaged. Intriguing...



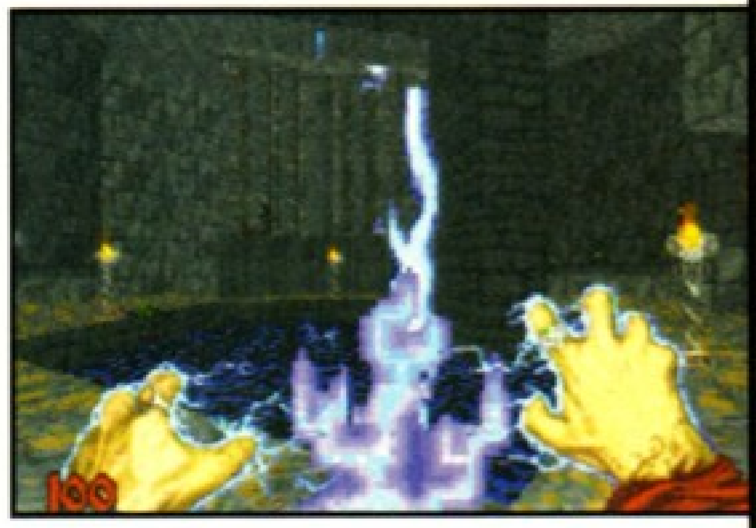
WEAPON #2: FROZEN SHARDS

Visually, this is a most impressive weapon. Each bolt takes up three of your hard-earned blue mana, but for that outlay you get a total of 17 bolts firing off at your opponents! At close range, no bolts are fired, but you get almost double the damage.



WEAPON #3: ARC OF DEATH

Bolts of electricity arc out from the ground and the ceiling in a most impressive manner. Once it has a target, it locks on and electrocutes the hapless meanie for a few seconds. For this fine monster-destroying service, you're charged a fairly decent five green mana.



WEAPON #4: BLOODSCOURGE

This is the Mage's equivalent of the Cleric's Wraithverge strike, only far more powerful. Using 15 of each colour strain of mana, it unleashes three immensely damaging fireballs. Any one of these can destroy any of the creatures with one hit.









What we haven't had space to include are various artifacts. One of them can even be used for flying purposes. Others repel your foes or even turn them into stinking pigs!



5. INTERACTIVE SCENERY

There's plenty of stuff to smash into oblivion or interact with in other ways. On the first level you can see plenty of stained glass windows which are broken to reveal useful power-ups. Also look out for hackable trees!



6. SET-PIECES

Some of the happenings in Hexen are pretty cool, in fact they could almost be described as set pieces. Probably the first you'll find is ringing the colossal bell which is found (not surprisingly) in the Bell Tower on the first stage.



7. MORE VARIETY

In the Hexen stages, there is far more variety in the make-up of the levels. Doom was pretty much limited to solid floors, water and energy-draining nukage. Hexen is a bit cleverer. A case in point is the mutant-packed swamp!



8. BETTER PUZZLES

Doom wasn't particularly noted for its puzzling, although the elements were there. Hexen's system boasts a hub-system which means you need to retrace your steps to earlier levels and explore newly opened areas.



SATURN MAG RANKS THE DOOM GAMES!

The first person perspective game happens to be one of the most popular, judging by the amount of mail received by SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE. Since so many of you have asked, here we rank the available examples of the genre.

1. EXHUMED
The best 3D engine with the most stunning lighting effects and super-smooth 3D update. As a one-player quest it starts off a bit dull, but later on its brilliance becomes self-evident. Tons of lastability too as the Tips Guide in this issue reveals.
RATING: 94%

2. HEXEN
GT's second stab at an id software conversion is pretty damn cool actually. As this showcase reveals, it's an almost flawless translation of the original marred only by a slightly jerky 3D update (compared to Exhumed). Still pretty cool though.
RATING: 88%

3. ALIEN TRILOGY
In Exhumed's realm of smoothness, Alien Trilogy is pretty damn cool actually. A very nice (albeit short-sighted) 3D engine and plenty to do. It's just a shame that the aliens themselves are a bit of a let-down. Still pretty enjoyable though.
RATING: 85%

4. DOOM
It might come after Alien Trilogy on our list, but there's really no competition. Doom is dreadful. Jerky 3D update completely ruins the playability and graphically speaking, it's only slightly better than the 32X version. A classic has been ruined.
RATING: 56%

5. ROBOTICA
The very first Doom style game for the Saturn, and although it is pretty smooth and quite enjoyable to begin with, the game is crushingly boring with very little to differentiate between one level and the rest. Worse than Doom. If that's possible.
RATING: 55%

1


2


3


4


5




The Mage's weaponry is heavy on mana usage, but produces extremely powerful results – the lightning weapon in particular is most impressive.



One advantage that the Doom engine has over Quake (yes even on the PC) is the sheer weight of numbers thrown at you. Even in the Saturn version, the enemies pose just as much of a problem as they did in their PC incarnation.











These wizards found later on are known for their speed and devious nature. A couple of axe chops should despatch him!



At close range, the wizard unleashes its full magical power. Still, it also makes him a sucker for a smash to the features!





Aha! More evil scum! Die! Die all of you! Suffer! Ahahahahaha!







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RAGE HARD!



More Saturn loveliness arrives this month courtesy of those ever-so-busy AM departments. Die Hard Arcade is the Saturn's full 3D answer to Streets of Rage, and most enjoyable it is too (although too short). Here's all the exciting bits, courtesy of RICH LEADBETTER...

There's something just a bit too satisfying about fighting games. With the Virtua Fighter series, it's one-on-one combat at its best - a test of nerve and technique against a human opponent. With the side-scrolling beat 'em up, things get a bit more sinister. It's you against the world and everyone - yes, EVERYONE - who dares cross your path will be on the receiving end of a knuckle sandwich. Or a kick to the knackers.

This type of game, popularised by Capcom's Final Fight and Ancient's Streets of Rage concentrates more on savage fighting and short term thrills than VF's technique-laden style.

As time has gone on, so too has the savagery of the games. The 16-bit games' baseball bats, swords and pepper sprays have given way to bigger and better hardware. Like rocket launchers. And anti-tank guns. Things are just a bit more realistic now - thanks in no small part to the excellent 3D graphics the Saturn is capable of.

But the thing is, it doesn't really matter how morally reprehensible these games are. The fact is that they're ace fun. And Die Hard Arcade is such a game. Outrageously over-the-top like Arnie films such as Commando or Eraser, and yet with it, highly amusing. I defy anyone not to at least snigger slightly at the broken spring noise and accompanying on-screen action that occurs when your opponents get struck square in the testicles. It's a classic videogames moment. Or the bit where you unleash the power of an anti-tank rifle in the small confines of a mens' latrine. The simple fact is that like the best action films, Die Hard Arcade features many entertaining set pieces guaranteed to amuse. Like battering the end-game boss into pulp using his own golf clubs! In fact, all that's missing is the trademark Scwarzenegger one-liners. But I'm sure you can make up your own. If you're clever.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Any one who has ever played Final Fight or Streets of Rage shouldn't have any difficulties getting into Die Hard Arcade as basically speaking the game concepts and even the button lay-outs are very similar. However, AM1 and the Sega Technical Institute have rather cunningly grafted in extra layers of Virtua Fighter style gameplay into the way the combat system works. That's why there's a whopping great moves list on this showcase.

The teams have even expanded the old "pick up a weapon" system to include multiple techniques for each tool you collect, depending on what it is. Plus you'll find some pretty smart extras, including the ability to arrest some foes, handcuffing them and removing them from the action that way. Or collecting a lighter and igniting your pepper spray, just like James Bond did with in Live and Let Die.

The bottom line is, Die Hard Arcade is very clever, taking the Final Fight genre into a new domain that's more than just the same old gameplay in a 3D environment. Even if that 3D environment is very nice.

When a game is truly innovative, aspects of it get copied. Already we're seeing elements of Die Hard turn up in preproduction software, such as the September Core game, Judgement Force, which looks like being even better than this!

LIVE AND LET DIE HARD ARCADE

The other staple element of the side-scrolling fighting game is the simultaneous two-player mode. Die Hard gives you such a mode, whereupon a decidedly flat-chested female detective makes the scene, armed with all of the same techniques as the male copper. It's this element of the game that does increase the lastability. And it needs it, because just like Final Fight and Streets of Rage before it, Die Hard is just too short and too easy.

But it is a hell of a lot of fun.

Die Hard Arcade is reviewed on page 62.

1



When carrying the handgun...

2



... you can arrest punks and take 'em out fast!

1



When grappling it's possible to execute...

2



... Virtua Fighter style throws, like this one.

1



Grapple your foe. Smack to the gut...

2



... followed by a devastating headbutt...

3



.. And finish with Wolf's throw from VF!



Here in the security room, things get tough. Those robots kick arse, big time,

UNARMED	
Triple Kick	KKK
Punch combo	PPPP
Kick combo	⇨KKK
Punch, Kick combo	PPPK
Kick, Punch combo	KKP
Spin kick	P+K+J
Jumping overhead punch	JP
Jump front kick	JK
Jump 2X dropkick	⇨JK
Lunge forward	⇨⇨
Lunge backward	⇦⇦ OR ⇨⇦
Run	⇨⇨
Running tackle	P while running
Running sidekick	K while running
Handspring back	⇦K during lunge
Dragon punch	P+J
Running shoulder	⇨P+J
Double back kick	⇨K+J
Shoulder slam	J ⇧+P
Knee slam	J ⇧+K
Backfist	⇦P
Turning sweep	⇦K
Low punch combo	⇩+PPP
Low kick combo	⇩+KKK
Low punch/kick combo	⇩+PPK

GRABBING OPPONENT	
Punch, elbow	PPP
Pin down, slam head	KKKKK
Forearm throw	⇦P
Shoulder throw	⇦K
Head slam	P+K+J
Upward stomach throw	P or K+J
Giant swing	PPKKP
German suplex	PPKKK
Leg swing	PKP
Suplex	PKK
Piledriver	KPP
Headlock slam	KPK

ARMED WITH CLUB WEAPON	
Overhead swinging	PPP
Wide swinging	KKK
Back swing	⇦P OR ⇦K
Jumping stab	J+P
High stab	⇧P
Low swing	⇧K

ARMED WITH MISSILE LAUNCHER	
Launch missile	P
Front kick	K
Back swing	⇦K

1



Another grapple combo starting with a knee!

2



Then a bit of tumbling on the ground...

3



... our hero prepares a devastating headbutt!

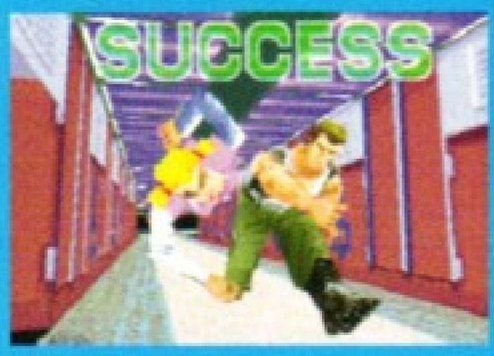
4



Dooosh! And it's all over. Very painful.







The intermission sections are just simple reaction testers. If you fail any of them, consider yourself crap at games.



It's Williams from Enter The Dragon!

LEVEL PREVIEW

The route through this terrorist-infested building is fraught with danger. Usually taking the form of multiple bad guys with a chip on their shoulder and some form of weaponry in their hands. This is the kind of action waiting for you in Die Hard Arcade!

1. Fire Escape

The action starts outside the building. A very simple stage with just a couple of meanies to mind out for. A taste of what's to come.





2. Inside the Building

Again, very simple. The cleaners have been here, leaving behind a broom. Use it to clean up the scum inside this room! Kill them all!





3. Elevator Hallway

A nice open area where you get your first taste of heavy calibre firepower! New danger crops up in the form of guys arriving via the lifts!





4. Car Park

Arriving in the car park, there's some trash to dispose of. Luckily there's an enormous skip here (which one of the bad guys falls into).





5. The Fire Engine

Bad dudes have dressed up as firemen and are now out to kick you about a bit. Dodge their rampaging engine, avoid the water blasts and let 'em have it!





6. The Mens' Room

Shades of True Lies here as you enter the toilets and beat >>

>> everyone about. Now which careless soul left that anti-tank gun on the floor? Sheesh...




7. Robots of Death
Security gets tough in the form of two heavily armoured robots. They're the toughest opponents you'd have faced yet and take plenty of damage.




8. The Lobby
Arriving at the building's main entrance, the screen is packed with bad guys. Guns are everywhere. Grab one and fire. Kill everyone with lead poisoning!




9. The Fountain
Moving back into the depths of the building, you face up against one bad dude and a similarly bad lady. The girl is easy to arrest, then the fight begins!




10. Aquarium
Things are definitely a bit fishy here. Your main adversary is one very big guy who gives you a severe headache... Literally. Things are getting tough.




11. Antenna Action
The bad guys you face here are more into defensive fighting, trying to make your collide with the rotating aerial, which moves around the perimeter of the play area, spinning aroun, smashing everyone in the head. Use low combos and destroy them!








INTERMISSION EXCITEMENT

In the early days of television, viewers were often entertained between programs with beautiful landscapes or small furry animals, accompanied by classical music. Not so in Die Hard Arcade. Here, the intermission scenes between the hardcore beat 'em up sections comes down to reaction-testing sections showing your fighter taking down an enemy with a surprise, off-the-cuff technique. That's if you get it right. Fail and the action goes to the normal side-on view and you have to finish them the hard way. On later stages, more meanies turn up to give their pals a hand. So get it right!

VIOLENCE? THIS?

On the options menu, there exists a rather bizarre option: VIOLENCE ON/OFF. The default setting is off, but don't worry, this doesn't mean that the in-game characters resolve their differences through negotiation. Oh no. IN fact, the only difference turning the option on makes is the appearance of red pixels purporting to be blood which are displayed whenever a hit connects. This is clearly an after-thought (probably added by Sega of America) which is a bit of a letdown, really. Violence on/off indeed. Pah!

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ST-V?

ST-V, as all SSM readers should know, is the low-cost arcade board Sega developed based on Saturn technology. Well, actually, ST-V IS a Saturn, just with extra memory and better sound. Die Hard Arcade is actually the last game to use the ST-V board and SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE can only wonder what has happened to ST-V development. There've been some classic games developed on the board such as Virtua Fighter Remix, Athlete Kings, Baku Baku and Virtua Fighter Kids - all of which have been perfectly recreated for the home market. It would be a shame if Sega of Japan has stopped ST-V development, particularly if the VF3 3D accelerator cartridge rumour turns out to be true. Let's wait and see eh?

1

This combo comprises of a couple of...

2

... very painful gut punches...

3

... followed by a "Glaswegian Kiss"...

4

... and finally a suplex style throw.

1

It's a knee to the gut! Yeaarghhh!

2

... followed by a headlock and a punch...

3

... and finishes off with this wrestling...

4

... style throw. Another awesome grab combo.



A couple of action shots of Die Hard Arcade. Lovely.





ON FLOOR	
Spring up	P or K or J
Roll over	⇧ P or K or J

ARMED WITH SHARP WEAPON	
Stabbing	PPPPPP
Swinging	KKK
Back swing	⇦P
Jumping stab	JP
Jumping spike	J ⇧P
Low swing	⇧K

ARMED WITH ANTI-TANK GUN	
Fire gun	P
Overhead swing	K
Back swing	B
Hard Back swing	⇦K

ARMED WITH HEAVY WEAPON	
Throw projectile	P
Front kick	K

ARMED WITH GUN	
Shoot	P
Jumping shot	JP
Turn & shoot	⇦P
Crouch shot	⇩P
Handcuff	Grab enemy, then PP or KK









Forget the bosses. These security robots are your toughest foes. Destroy them all! Especially these nastier yellow variety.



Our hero attempts a low-kick combo against one of the bosses. And it works!



Boom! Someone's found the rocket launcher...



Here we are in the Car Park...



... Where our hero lets off a Capcom-style...



... Dragon Punch! Arooga! Etcetera etcetera.

12. Robots' Revenge

Remember those tough mother-effers from the Security Room? Well, meet their big brothers and ready yourself for the toughest fight of the game yet!



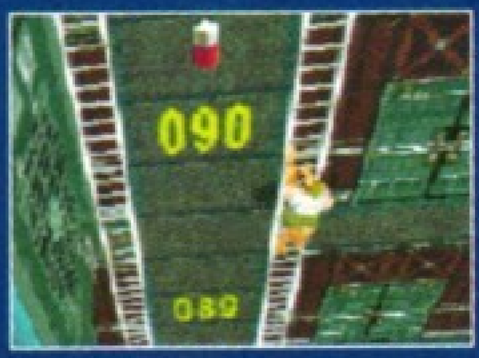

13. The Lounge

A battle royale with three very big, very mean "dudes". Luckily, there's plenty of assistance lying on the floor. Use everything against these guys!




14. The Lift Shaft

A change of pace as you climb up one of two ladders. Just follow the left/right instructions on-screen and grab those power-ups.

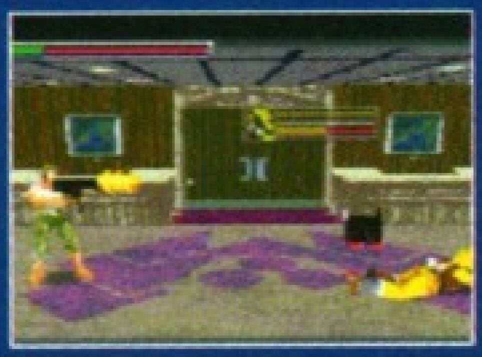
15. Walkway

The game starts to throw in just about as many opponents as it can handle. Mostly they come from the left - use that rocket launcher on the mothers!




16. Reception Area

A slew of bad guys and firemen turn up, determined to do their worst on your sorry ass. Save the rocket launcher for the BIG fireman at the end.

17. End Boss Confrontation

This is it! The life of the president's daughter is at stake and you need to take down the world's meanest fighter mano a mano. Destroy him!




The MegaMix

Once again SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE returns to AM2's latest Saturn title: the incredible Fighters MegaMix! In the last issue, we revealed a couple of the secret characters and dropped plenty of hints for you to guess at. This month, the waiting is over! All of those secret fighters are fully revealed, plus we reveal some more AM2 oddities added to this classic. Oh, and we interview the programmers. RICH LEADBETTER writes...

At the time of writing, Fighters MegaMix has been out just under one month in Japan and just about everyone who has the game has all of the secret characters saved onto their Saturns. But there's a lot more in the way of secrets to discover yet and despite the Japanese doing their hardest, the game still has many hidden aspects not yet revealed! We aren't going to spoil everything in this feature, but we do show off a lot more of the game following last month's basic play guide (and if you don't have that, shame on you! Get a back issue NOW).

Having spent many, many hours playing the title now, we're finally able to tell you guys exactly what the game offers over and above Fighting Vipers and Virtua Fighter 2. We're also able to conduct a comparison with VF3, from where a lot of the VF characters draw their techniques.

FIGHTERS MEGAMIX

MEGAMIX: A CUT-DOWN VF3?

The big question at the moment is, just how much have AM2 given away with Fighters MegaMix? Is the game really as close to VF3 as everyone is making out? In our last issue, we said that around 70% to 80% of the VF3 moves have been included and we pretty much stand by that assessment.

However, after a return trip to the arcades, we can report that the actual gameplay in MegaMix is a lot, lot different. If you're hoping to use MegaMix to "train" for VF3, there's some good news and bad news. First the good: yes, the moves are much the same and this will prepare you well. The bad news is that any in-depth experience you build up in terms of combinations and what-have-you won't really help at all.

The system for floating combos in VF3 is entirely different - not least because of the different level of terrain on each of the stages. Also, some moves in MegaMix will float your opponent (allowing you to score extra hits) whilst others won't. The system employed for attacking on the ground is entirely different too. The dodging with the escape button is a different kettle of fish as well. Can you see where we're headed here?

The bottom line is this. MegaMix has VF3 moves, but in terms of actual gameplay, the title is more like Fighting Vipers. Yes, even when you switch to VF mode! VF has always been technically flawless, specialising more on precision control than the intentionally more arcadey Fighting Vipers, and in short the tactics used in VF3 are pretty much totally new. So that's that sorted out then.









Truly this is a MegaMix. Of VF and FV for sure. And some weird stuff too.



Akira slams into secret character Rentahero with the power of his dashing shoulder charge! Depending on the costume chosen, Rentahero either has a VF or FV shirt on underneath!

Continues!







One of the most impressive features about Fighters MegaMix is undoubtedly the lovely lighting effects. Particularly on the stages pictured around this caption.













PAL CONVERSION UPDATE

As we write, AM2 are embarking on converting across Fighters MegaMix to the PAL Saturn system. We can guarantee a full-screen, full-speed display and the conversion should be as flawless as Virtua Fighter 2 was. Very good news indeed, then.

Sega of America have demanded some cuts from their version of Fighters MegaMix and in the past Europe has had to put up with a conversion of the US game. Not so with MegaMix, which will feature EVERYTHING that the Japanese version of the game had along with various gameplay tweaks designed to get the most out of the game. For one thing it should be tougher than the Japanese game. More good news eh?

PAL Fighters MegaMix will be reviewed soon.



Janet has some of Aoi's reversals from VF3.



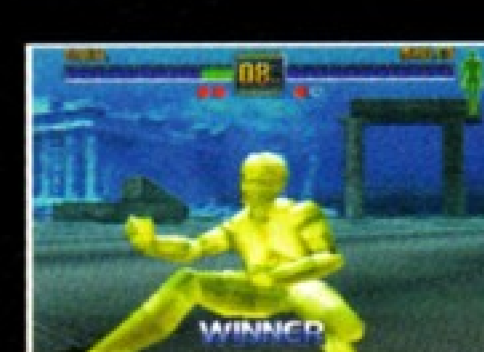


Bahn is hardly the powerhouse he was in Fighting Vipers (although he's doing fine here against Mahler). That's why the Ura Bahn secret character is so important.



Some boss versus boss action as Dural effortlessly reverses a combo strike from BM!





TEN HIDDEN FIGHTERS

As we gave away in the last epic issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, extra characters are added to your fighting roster by completing the various permutations of the one-player mode. In all there are nine different courses of different fighters... complete them all and the hidden fighters are yours.

SECRET CHARACTER #1: JANET MARSHALL

The new heroine from Virtua Cop 2 is added to your saved position by completing the All Girls round of MegaMix. Full details on what she can do were in the last issue. Since then a couple more new moves have come to light. Fire three shots quickly in a row and you get the helper from Virtua Cop 2 shout "reload!" and you get to see Janet put new ammo in her gun. Also try out ⇨⇧⇩⇧⇦ P+G as a throw to twirl your foe around. Follow up with P+G for a stunning throw combo!



SECRET CHARACTER #2: KIDS AKIRA

You get the Virtua Fighter Kids rendition of VF's most powerful player just by completing the Virtua Fighter round on the one-player mode. Just the same as normal Akira but with shorter arms and legs.



SECRET CHARACTER #3: KIDS SARAH

Like Kids Akira, you get Sarah in her Kids form by completing the VF round. She suffers from the same arms/legs problem as Akira. Oddly enough, her stage is a remixed version of Sarah's stage from VF1!



SECRET CHARACTER #4: NEW CANDY

Complete the novice round for this new version of Candy (just press X on Candy on the character select screen). There are two different versions of this costume to get though...



SECRET CHARACTER #5: BEAN

Curious as to why AM2 did not include Sonic from the blue hedgehog's arcade fighting title in MegaMix? It's simple. Sonic is a creation of the Sonic Team, whereas Bean and Bark were two new characters designed by AM2. That's why they're here. Bean is bomb-lobbing character from Sonic The Fighters and has many different incendiary-throwing techniques. Try ⇨P, ⇨K, ⇧PPPP and ⇦⇨PP. By using the dash technique, it's also possible to see Bean run up the walls in the game! Both of the Sonic Fighters in MegaMix boast backgrounds based around Sonic The Fighters too. Cool eh?



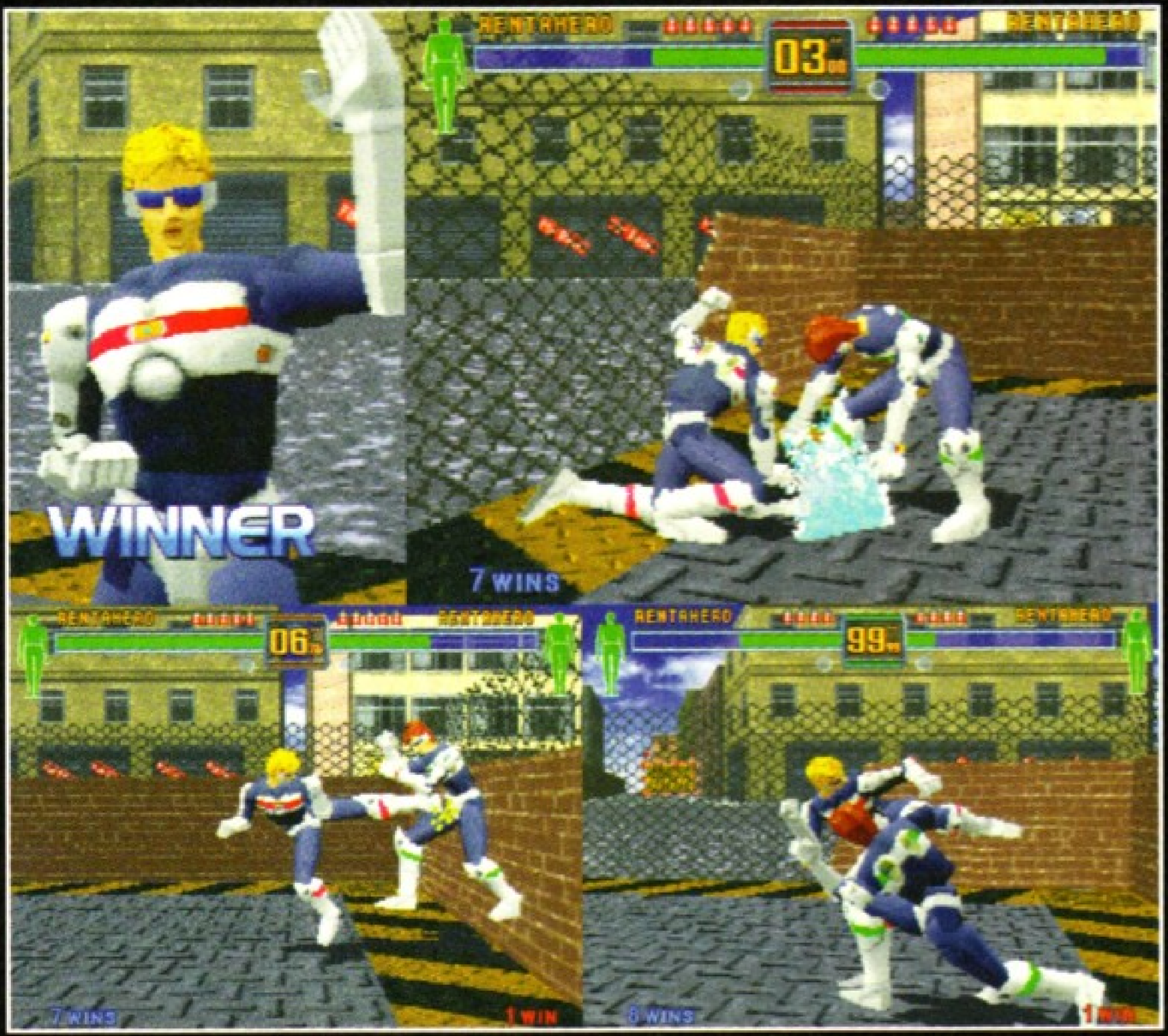
SECRET CHARACTER #6: BARK

One of AM2's lesser known arcade hits is Sonic The Fighters, which although immensely playable and most enjoyable indeed, didn't receive that much of an outing in UK arcades. Bark is one of the fighters that AM2 commissioned especially for the game, adding their own characters to the cast created by the Sonic Team. What is strange is that Bark has several throws that only work when his opponent is one of the VF Kids or a fellow Sonic Fighter. Try: ⇩⇧⇨P+G, ⇩⇩P+G, ⇧⇧P+G, and ⇦⇨⇦P+G. There's also an alternate costume Bark, which is pictured below. His usual Sonic The Fighters look is replaced with a Santa Claus costume!



SECRET CHARACTER #7: RENTAHERO

Not exactly one of AM2's finest hours, Rentahero was a role-playing game released on the Megadrive in Japan a few years ago. A bloke with a robo-suit, essentially, Rentahero is powered by batteries (shown above the energy bar) which wear out over time. When they're gone, the armour vanishes! In a first for a VF game, Rentahero actually has a fireball style move (activated in the usual Capcom fashion) which inflicts huge amounts of damage. Also notable is the fact that after his armour's power is depleted, Rentahero reveals that he's wearing a Fighting Vipers or Virtua Fighter t-shirt!



SECRET CHARACTER #3: URA BAHN

Get this classy fighter by defeating the Fighting Vipers round of the game. Ura Bahn is essentially a super-powered version of the regular Bahn, equipped with a few new moves. In essence, he has the power of a Virtua Fighter combined with the speed of a Fighting Viper. We reckon that basically he's a tweaked up version of Bahn who can actually give Akira some competition. Another notable aspect of Ura Bahn is his background. It's all-new and set outside the confines of Armstone City out in the wastelands.



SECRET CHARACTER #9: DEKU

Here's a completely new AM2 creation, designed especially for Fighters MegaMix. Deku is essentially just an enormous great bean with a funny face and a nice hat. He doesn't actually have a huge repertoire of techniques as such. He's just a bit of a comedy character along the lines of Kumachan in Fighting Vipers. Only with less moves.



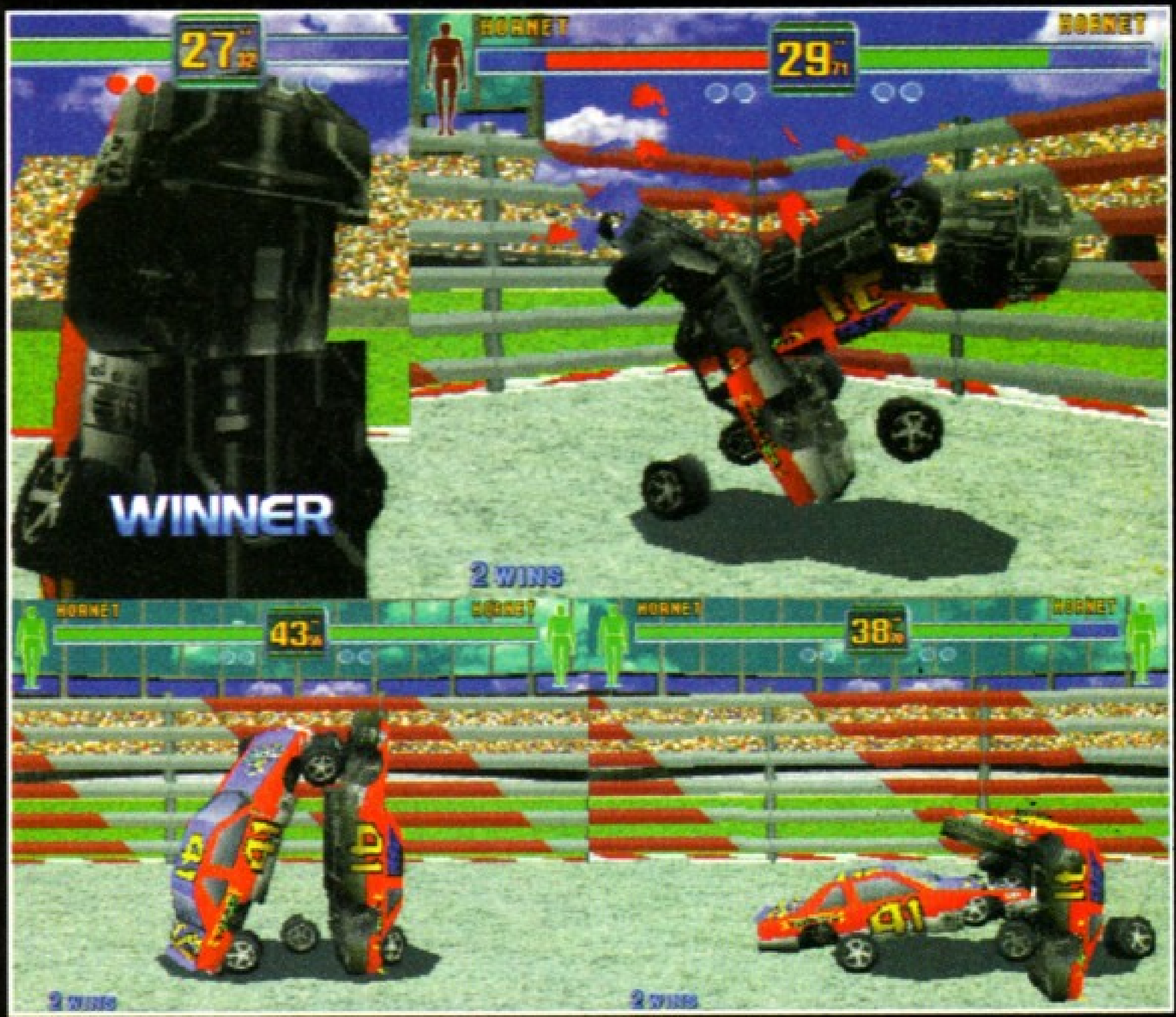
SECRET CHARACTER #10: SIBA

When the original Virtua Fighter 1 first went out on the arcade exhibition circuit, one of the fighters contained therein was Siba (although it was spelled differently). This arab character in MegaMix looks like him but plays nothing like him (which may explain the name change). In command of an enormous sword, Siba doesn't actually have that many techniques. It's just that a few of them use his sword and it's impossible to guard against these attacks. You get plenty of warning though and characters with reversals can counter these moves. Siba has a floating strike that sends an opponent flying into the air, leaving them helpless for a sword strike. This combination attack drains around 65% of the energy bar! Also, look at Siba's background... Virtua Fighter 3 players should recognise it as the Desert stage (with some minor compromises) and you even get the appropriate VF3 music here too! Arooga!



SECRET CHARACTER #11

The last course in the one-player mode throws the majority of the hidden characters at you, and the prize for completing this part of the game is a rendition of the Hornet race car from Daytona USA! Its wheels replace limbs and moves are limited. At least you think they are. With the full bodywork on, there are only a few moves to appreciate, but press ⇦P+K and the amour is thrown off, revealing the chassis of the car. In this guise, Hornet has all of the techniques of Bahn!



AM2 INTERVIEWED!

Despite being extremely busy converting Fighters MegaMix across from the NTSC version onto our lovely PAL system. AM2 took time out from the work to answer a few cunning questions levelled at them by SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE's Japan Editor, Warren Harrod. Read on...

SSM How did you come up with the concept for Fighters MegaMix?
AM2 Towards the end of the year we always think about having a festive game for all the users who support the Sega Saturn. After various considerations we came up with "Fighters MegaMix" however, there was a time, when we first began development, when we even called the game "Fighting Festival".

SSM What were your main objectives with this game?
AM2 What we wanted for the users was firstmost, the full force of 32 characters appearing in a fighting game. Not just Virtua Fighter 2 or Fighting Vipers but a completely new fighting game.

SSM Development seems to have been extremely rapid. In order to put all the VF2 and FV characters in one game, what difficulties were there?
AM2 To tell the truth, the work of putting the Virtua Fighter 2 and Fighting Vipers characters in the same 'ring' wasn't that difficult.

SSM Bearing in mind the short development schedule, is there anything you would have liked to have included in the finished MegaMix but weren't able to?
AM2 As planners, programmers and designers then there were certainly things that even though we wanted to do it we weren't able to do, but nothing we could explain about.

SSM It was said that during development of VF2 it was difficult to compress all the 2,000 different techniques. Bearing this in mind how did you achieve Fighters MegaMix, which has all the moves from VF2,Vipers and some VF3 techniques?
AM2 There is a limitation to the memory capacity but, in this game as many techniques as possible were put in so the motion structure construction was regarded as important. In addition, compression technology has advanced. This alone was the main factor in being able to successfully include so many techniques.

SSM Despite the similarities, VF2 and Fighting Vipers are very different to play. How were you able to get the gameplay balance right?
AM2 With regards to the game balance we enhanced those good parts possessed by both of them.

SSM How many VF3 new techniques are included in MegaMix?
AM2 About 50% of the main essence of Virtua Fighter 3 is there. If you talk about the characters then all of the 11 Virtua Fighter 2 characters can be called Virtua Fighter 3, however, that doesn't mean that all of the VF3 techniques can be used.

SSM New moves have been promised for the Vipers. How did you plan, which characters would use which new techniques?
AM2 By keeping true to our own images of the characters we distributed the techniques most fitting to each character.

SSM How did you decide which characters to include?
AM2 All the MegaMix developers concerned discussed this matter together and then decided. The focus was on AM2.

SSM Were there any secret characters you would have liked to include but you weren't able to include?
AM2 Not especially. We put all the included characters in the select screen, hidden beneath the ?.

SSM How have you changed the audio side of things in MegaMix? Can we expect new music and effects?
AM2 All the sound for the opening movie, ending and hidden characters is new (although we don't know if they will be included in the foreign versions) so please look forward to that. Also, in this game there are 56 tunes included so you could say it was the best AM2 game release.
SSM Which aspect of Fighters MegaMix are you most proud of?
AM2 This was a major project for us so for the time being we're proud to have just finished it. In addition we're proud to have created this new offering for the user.

MORE HIDDEN CHARACTERS?

After playing for a long while (details of exactly what to do will be forthcoming in an issue closer to the game's UK release), TWO MORE characters actually become available. In actual fact, they are just different costumes for Kumachan. The two different costumes take the form of a huge joint of comedy meat with hands and feet, as well as a polygonised version of the palm tree which makes up part of the AM2 logo!





OPTIONS PLUS

Since the days of Virtua Fighter 2, AM2 have given us a hidden options screen to find. So it is with Fighters MegaMix. We aren't really revealing too much to show what options are available on this screen. It's the usual stuff: no damage for both players, various level selects for the different modes... I think you get the idea. And if you don't, well, the accompanying screenshot should help. A bit.



THE BOOK KEEP SCREEN

On the Options Screen, there's a special Book Keep area. On an arcade machine, the Book Keep section logs all activity on the game (although you need the arcade owner's key to access it) and AM2 have recently added this to their home conversions. Here you can pick up some pretty amazing stats. Which also unlock some other secrets.





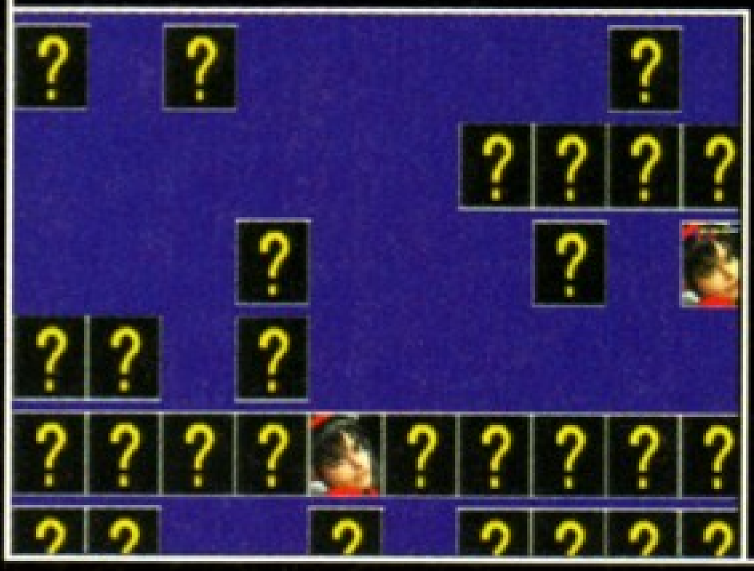




Some more action shots. Proof positive (if any evidence we required) that Fighters MegaMix is indeed a classy action number of unprecedented proportions.

PATIENCE, YOUNG JEDI

The Japanese have just found this hidden card game in Fighters MegaMix, which is extremely well secreted. It's kind of like the match-the-icon Presents game in Christmas NiGHTS but for every matching pair you get a new piece of AM2 art to look at!





MORE VF3 STUFF HIDDEN!

All of the Virtua Fighters seem to have most of their techniques from VF3... including some that aren't on the moves list on training mode. Specifically, these are moves where the VFers use the walls. Just try all of their throws near a wall and at least one should be different.









Hhhmmm. There's still no word on an official UK release for Fighters MegaMix, although with Manx TT lined up as the top Easter time game, we wouldn't expect to see it until about May time. Sigh. And double sigh.

THE AFTERBURNER PLANE!

Remember Afterburner? Well, it's on the Saturn Sega Ages pack for one thing. Still, the F-14 featured makes a fly-by in Fighters MegaMix, kind of like the plane on Tokio's stage but going in the other direction. But it only happens on one particular level and you need to enter a simple code. Other stages have various secret bits and bobs too. They're not really spectacular but cool if you can find them.



HIDDEN AM2 ARTWORK!

If you own a PC with a CD-ROM drive you might be intrigued to learn that AM2 have hidden some special artwork on the production MegaMix CD. The Saturn uses the same format CD as the PC so you can read this artwork off and use it as wallpaper on Windows. The file is OMAKE___.LZH and you need a program called LHA to decompress it. Here's some of what you get:

1. TASTE OF HONEY
Awesome Candy/Honey render as used gratuitously in last month's 1997 Starts With A Bang feature!

2. CANDY AT THE DISCO
Another render we used in last month's issue, this shows the secret costume version of Candy. Cool.

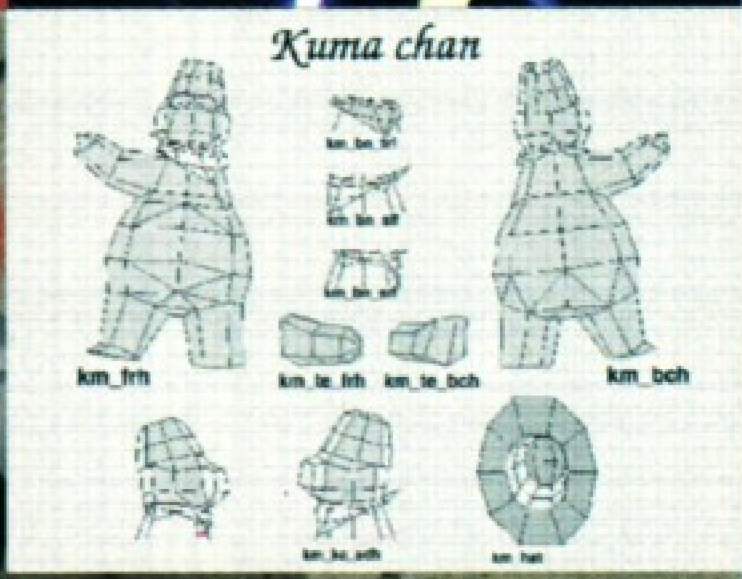
3. JANET MARSHALL
Janet "Hubcaps" Marshall from Virtua Cop 2 is shown leaning against a wall with her Virtua Gun.

4. POSTCARD FROM ARMSTONE CITY
As you might have guessed, this is actually a postcard from the city venue of Fighting Vipers!

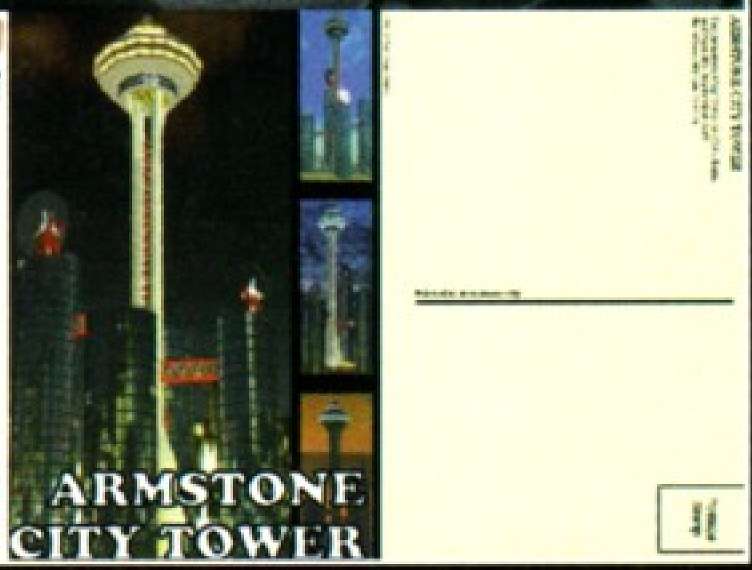
5. KUMACHAN BLUEPRINT
Here you can see how the comedy character from Fighting Vipers is constructed in polygon form.

6. PANTONE CHART
The colours of the Fighting Vipers' costumes is shown on this piece of modern art. A reference table really.







Marvel Mayhem!

The most popular comics characters are hitting Sega Saturn in a double whammy of Capcom fighting game excitement! Two of the most eagerly awaited games of this year are Marvel Super Heroes and X-Men Versus Street Fighter. We take a look at the arcade games which the Saturn looks set to duplicate and check out the origins of these excellent characters.

Aside from Batman and Superman, who are owned by DC, the world's most recognisable super hero comic creations all come from Marvel Comics. Although comic sales are continuing to decline, comics characters themselves go from strength to strength, making the leap from printed page to screen in the form of videogames and of course, movies (expect Fantastic Four and X-Men motion pictures this year in addition to the much vaunted Batman and Robin and a new Superman flick).

Marvel games licenses abound: we already have X-Men: Children of the Atom and Marvel Super Heroes and X-Men Versus Street Fighter are on the way! When you think about it, comics characters are perfect for games - their strengths as personalities have been built up over decades, everyone knows who they are and what they can do and their various super-powers make for brilliant videogames.

The only thing that does upset me a bit is that the characters are forced into game genres as opposed to having the game built around the character. Although characterisation is good in the Capcom fighting games, there's only a faint resemblance in their activities compared to what they get up to in the comics. Still, if the game's really good (and all Capcom's Marvel games have been), you can't complain.







MARVEL SUPER HEROES

Capcom's follow-up to the unforgettable X-Men: Children of the Atom is a dream come true for most Marvel fans. What if Capcom ditched the lesser known characters from their last Marvel game and introduced some of the heavy hitters from the rest of the Marvel Universe?

That's exactly what they've done with MSH which features Spider-Man, Hulk, Captain America and Iron Man in addition to X-Men Wolverine and Psylocke. Super villain presence comes in the form of Juggernaut, Magneto plus obscure characters Shuma Gorath and Blackheart. You get some awesome bosses in the form of Doctor Doom and Thanos.

Very loosely based on the Infinity Gauntlet series of comics, Marvel Super Heroes also features power-up Infinity Gems which boost their respective powers. This is classic Capcom stuff, with the X-Men engine being boosted to its heights with some excellent characters and a better version of the Create-A-Combo system used in Children of the Atom.

The Saturn version should be available in Japan between March and May and SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE suspects that we'll get a UK release sometime in the summer. Let's hope Capcom can better the awful PAL conversion of X-Men... Well, they couldn't do any worse.



Spider-Man lies defeated in Doctor Doom's labs. Capcom have even included Doom's mechanical servants, one of his robot replicas and even his faithful Latverian aide, Boris!









For Marvel Super Heroes, Capcom used their own distinctive art style for the graphics, but not forgetting the essence of the character. The Spidey/Doom confrontation (right) shows the characters' respective styles perfectly!

COMICS THROUGH THE AGES

THE GOLDEN AGE

The Golden Age of Comics began in 1938 when Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster invented Superman in Action Comics #1. The name "Superman" gave birth to the phrase "super hero". DC followed up the success of Superman with Batman in 1939 in Detective Comics #27. Near Mint editions of these comics are worth about $175,000 and $140,000 respectively. Ouch. During this age, Marvel Comics (known as Atlus Comics at the time) introduces readers to the Human Torch and the Sub-Mariner.





THE SILVER AGE

Again, DC take honours for ushering in a new phase of comics, thought to have begun with Showcase #4 (worth about $22,000), which debuted a new version of The Flash. However, the Silver Age really belongs to Marvel Comics, who in the early

>>

ESSENTIAL MARVEL MOMENTS #1: **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1 TO #38**

The acclaimed run of comics by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko - the guys who created ol' Spidey. A revelation in comics as bookish Peter Parker gets bitten by a radioactive spider. The power goes to his head, leading to the biggest mistake of his life - letting a burglar get away, a burglar who later kills his beloved Uncle Ben. Stricken with remorse, Parker enters the field of crime-fighting, learning that with great power there must also come great responsibility. These early issues are awesome - brilliantly original bad guys, plus genuine human interest as Peter Parker tackles adolescent problems just as taxing as dangerous super villains! Obviously the price of these issues makes collecting the originals a fantasy, but the best reprints are the hardcover Marvel Masterworks (very hard to find) or the recently released Essential Spider-Man (cheap, but black and white and only prints issues #1 to #20).



The success of Amazing Fantasy #15 led to Spider-Man getting his own series in 1963. The rest, as they say, is history...



Spidey's will to succeed despite the odds, with his Aunt's life in the balance, makes this scene from ASM #33 a comics classic.



Stan Lee's snappy dialogue combined with Steve Ditko's art and sense of pace made Spidey's super-battles amusing and exciting.







X-MEN VERSUS STREET FIGHTER



The huge sprites and sheer amount of them on-screen at any one time makes X-Men Versus Street Fighter possible only on Sega Saturn. Capcom have announced that this game will appear ONLY on the Saturn with no PlayStation version at all (like X-Men).

The premise of this game is original. Mutant super villain Apocalypse has abducted both X-Men and Street Fighters, meaning that the two rosters of fighters team up for one mighty rumble! All of the X-Men heroes from Children of the Atom return (bar Colossus, Psylocke and Iceman), their ranks supplemented by the inclusion of Rogue and Gambit. Sabretooth also turns up to help out the villains. Street Fighters Ryu, Ken, M Bison, Chun Li, Cammy, Dhalsim, Charlie, Akuma and Zangief are Capcom's chosen SF champions. The biggest innovation about this game is the fact that you can choose any two characters and switch between them at will! Team Supers bring both characters on-screen, pulling off their super moves together in an awesome display of power. There are also Team Counters, where one fighter guards and the other jumps on to attack. This team stuff means that Capcom are going to need to contain twice as much data in memory as in previous coin-op conversions. We can only think that the game will come with a memory cart or something in order to preserve the graphics.



A MIS-MATCHED BATTLE?

You might think that the Street Fighters would be pretty out-matched by the super-powered X-Men. And you'd be right. That being the case, Capcom have beefed up the capabilities of their heroes quite a bit. Ryu's Super Fireball looks just as impressive as Cyclops' optic blast and Dhalsim launches a veritable yoga inferno instead of his usual tiny gobs of flame! What is most impressive about this game is that the whole concept is based around team-work, which after all is also the basis for what the X-Men are about. Capcom have also been a bit cleverer in their choice of X-personages this time around too, opting to include the very popular Rogue and Gambit plus one of the most interesting Marvel super-villains in the form of Sabretooth (much missed from X-Men: Children of the Atom). Comics crossovers between the characters of different companies are very much in vogue at the moment so it was the obvious step to bring the X-Men and Street Fighters together in a videogame, especially seeing as though the Capcom characters are now established comic creations too. This has resulted in a lack of attention to detail (something X-Men: COTA certainly didn't lack), but the resulting game is still pretty ace and will be a brilliant Saturn release.









Capcom really hammer home the comics connection in X-Men Versus Street Fighter with some excellent panel style art.



ESSENTIAL MARVEL MOMENTS #2: **JOHN BYRNE'S FANTASTIC FOUR RUN**

Stan Lee and Jack Kirby invented the characters, but the FF were never greater than in John Byrne's run (issues #209 to #293 ish). Despite being over a decade old, issues shouldn't cost more than a quid or so each. Also look out for The Trial of Galactus book, which features the FF at their best along with the most brilliant members of their supporting cast - Silver Surfer, Doctor Doom and devourer of planets, Galactus! Quite frankly, Byrne was the master story teller and he did both the story and art for The Fantastic Four during his run on the book. Fantastic Four #257 (included in the afore-mentioned Galactus book) was probably the most genius issue of all and didn't even have the FF in it, concentrating instead on Doctor Doom's latest scheme for world domination, his rule of his country Latveria... and of course, his plan for the utter destruction of the FF.



Byrne covered just about all the Fantastic Four's villains during his run, with particularly memorable moments from Doctor Doom.



Fantastic Four #257 didn't have the FF in it, concentrating instead on a day in the life of Doctor Doom. And it was Bryne's best issue!



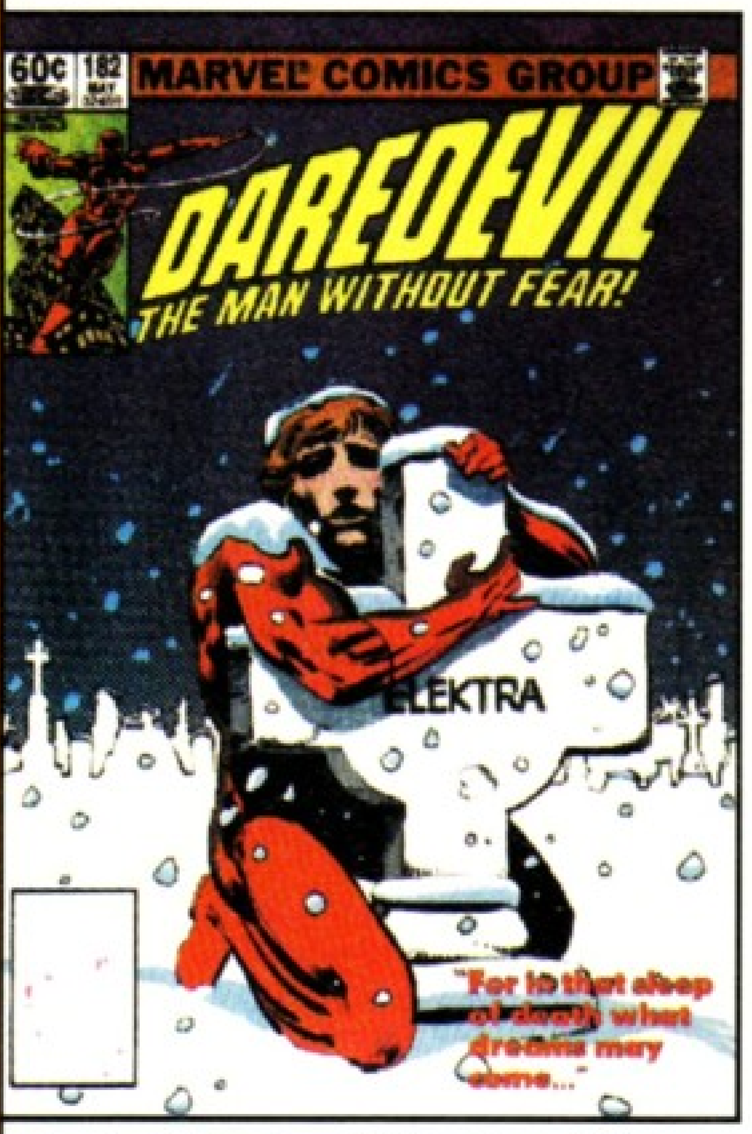
Mr Fantastic, Reed Richards, dooms a civilisation by saving the life of Galactus in Bryne's best storyline, 'The Trial of Galactus'.



sixties created incredible characters beginning with the Fantastic Four and followed up with the likes of Spider-Man, The Incredible Hulk, the Avengers, the X-Men, Daredevil and Iron Man. Marvel's Stan Lee, Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko are credited for elevating comics by introducing more dynamic story-telling, more of a human angle and placing all of their characters in a single world (later a universe).

ESSENTIAL MARVEL MOMENTS #3: **MILLER'S DAREDEVIL**

The man who did The Dark Knight Returns for DC also produced equally stunning work for Marvel at much the same time. Frank Miller's Daredevil (#158-#161 and #168 to #190) was as much a milestone as Dark Knight with stunning artwork and consistently brilliant story-telling. It also had probably the best fight scenes in comics at the time with Miller actually choreographing his characters' actions. Plus, whenever the Punisher turned up you know there'd be some serious shit going down as opposed to his latter day pussy activities. Back issues are very expensive, but softcover paperback reprints are common. Any stories featuring the Punisher or villain Bullseye are highly recommended, but in actuality every issue is a classic. As well as the issues above, check out the Miller-scripted Man Without Fear miniseries which only came out a few years ago, but shows that Miller's powers are just as great.



Daredevil's true love Elektra dies at the hands of Bullseye. In true Marvel style in later years she "got better".



Reporter Ben Urich uncovers DD's real identity, which has since become the Marvel Universe's worst kept secret.



Whenever the Punisher turned up in a Miller Daredevil comic, you were guaranteed entertainment of the highest order!

THE MODERN AGE

Nobody knows or really cares where this begun, but sometime



>>

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

This game has been out officially since Summer last year and is a Capcom fighting game in a class of its own. In Japan, it actually predated Street Fighter Alpha, and to be honest, a lot of the problems Capcom solved in later games are evident here. Most noticeably, the loading time and the omission of some animation is also evident.

Despite this, X-Men is still a brilliant coin-op conversion, featuring all of the characters, techniques and gameplay of the massively popular arcade game. It seems that the Saturn's 2D power is without limits judging by the sheer amount going on in this game - try out a Juggernaut vs Sentinel battle and you just won't believe that it's the humble Saturn producing such incredible visuals.

Unfortunately, Capcom have really let the side down with the quality of the PAL conversion. The borders are massive, but worse still, the game is a lot, lot slower than the Japanese and American versions. In Street Fighter Alpha there was always the option of increasing the Turbo setting to compensate, but you can't do it here. In another two-fingered salute to the European games player, Capcom also removed the secret cheat to play as the Juggernaut - definitely the best hidden aspect of the Japanese version.

Still, if you have a switch added to your Saturn to switch the machine into NTSC mode, you instantly get over the worst of X-Men's shortcomings. In fact, for hardcore gamers, getting an NTSC switch added to your Saturn is a very good idea generally, X-Men or no X-Men.







Saturn X-Men was a brilliant game (and never appeared on PlayStation) but suffered in the conversion to the UK PAL format.

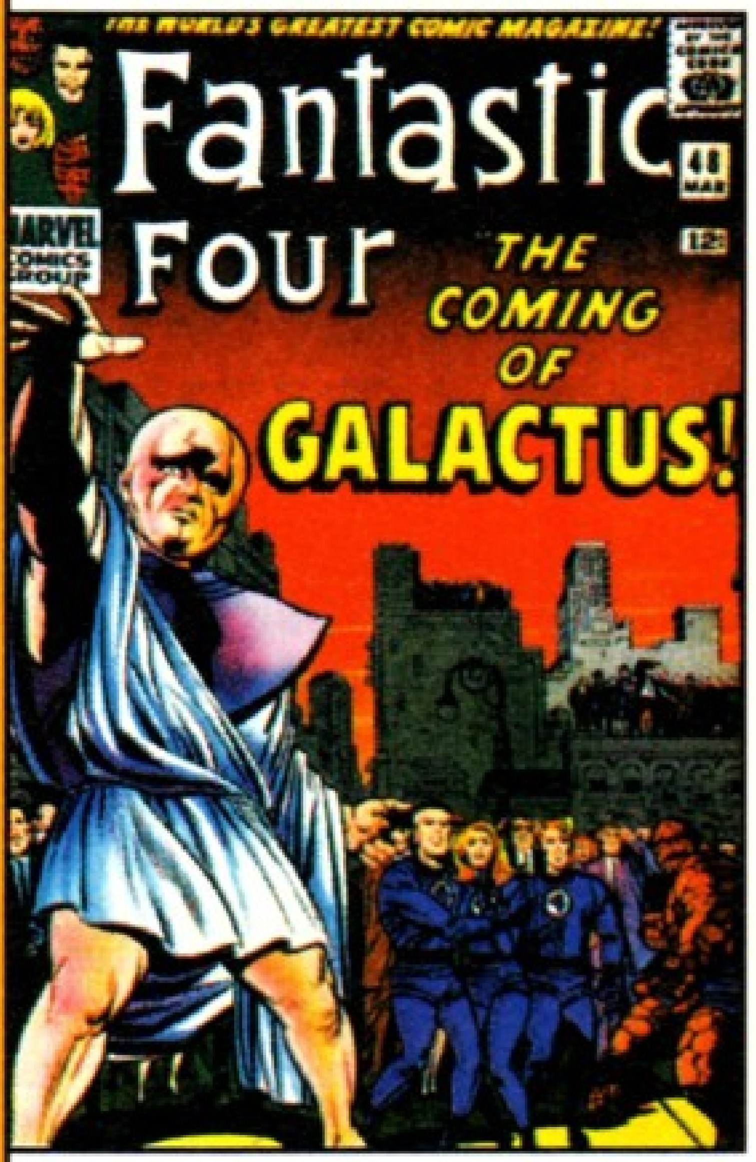
X-MEN THROUGH TIME

It's clear that Capcom have put a huge amount of research into X-Men: Children of the Atom, as any Marvel expert will be able to see. For example, on Wolverine's Savage Land stage there's an abandoned base in one of the fields of parallax scrolling... which just happens to be Magneto's old fortress from a near-forgotten sixties X-story! The backgrounds in the game pay homage to some of the X-Men's finest moments in their 30-year-odd history. You get the modern Japan setting where Wolverine faced off against the Silver Samurai and you even get Mojo-World, the deranged TV ratings obsessed dimension presided over by the hideous Mojo. Most recognisable of all is the holographic Danger Room (Cyclops' stage) where the X-Men train their mutant capabilities (and Professor X is in the background too). It seems that the settings have dictated the roster of characters. After all it does seem a bit odd to have the likes of Silver Samurai and Spiral about when there are far more worthy villains in the X-Universe, like Mr Sinister or Sabretooth. In fact, the entire concept of one-on-one fighting isn't really what the X-Men are about and the thought of Psylocke taking Magneto down mano a mano is pretty far-fetched. Still, it's only a game eh? And in Children of the Atom's case, a bloody good one which all Saturn owners should really have in their collections.



ESSENTIAL MARVEL MOMENTS #4: **THE GALACTUS TRILOGY**

Issues #48 to #50 of the Fantastic Four were near-apocalyptic for the Marvel Universe as Galactus and the Silver Surfer turn up to have Earth for dinner. Probably the first plausible "End of the World" story, even the Fantastic Four's powers are as nothing in the face of a truly god-like creature. The greatest part of Jack Kirby and Stan Lee's FF partnership, this story began a true age of excellence for Marvel's premier super-team which lasted a further 50 issues before Kirby quit the company. Until John Byrne turned up, Galactus went from supreme being in the universe to petty villain, but here in these stories he's really something special - a character beyond mere good or evil. The Silver Surfer became a special, untouchable part of Marvel and Stan Lee wouldn't let any one else write this character for many years, maintaining his unique appeal.



Silver Age Fantastic Four at its best in a story that introduced the Silver Surfer.



Jack Kirby's idea was literally to face the FF off against a creature of infinite god-like power.

ESSENTIAL MARVEL MOMENTS #5: **CLAREMONT/BYRNE X-MEN RUN**

The X-Men are the most popular comics around today, but they'd be nothing without the classic John Byrne/Chris Claremont X-Men run. Issues #108 to #143 are the ones to look for (again reprints are best as back issues get more expensive by the month!) and feature some of the best team-based comics activities you're ever likely to read. Claremont's scripting and story ideas were second to none, Bryne's artwork and co-plotting were almost perfect. What's so special about these issues? Well, the Bryne/Claremont era produced some of the most memorable X-storylines ever - the death of Jean Grey as Dark Phoenix in a truly powerful scenario being foremost among them. This era also elevated Wolverine from team brawler status into a truly interesting, more rounded character (probably explained by Byrne's shared Canadian nationality with Wolvers). Again, just great comics.



Byrne's Dark Phoenix Saga saw X-Man Jean Grey wipe out an entire solar system!



For her crimes, Marvel dictated that Jean Grey had to die. But she "got better" later.



Byrne's depiction of Wolverine put him on the road to super stardom.



in the early seventies a new wave of comics emerged. The new X-Men redefined what comics where all about and a new, modern wave of heroes and anti-heroes emerged such as Wolverine, Ghost Rider and The Punisher.

THE DECLINE AND RISE?

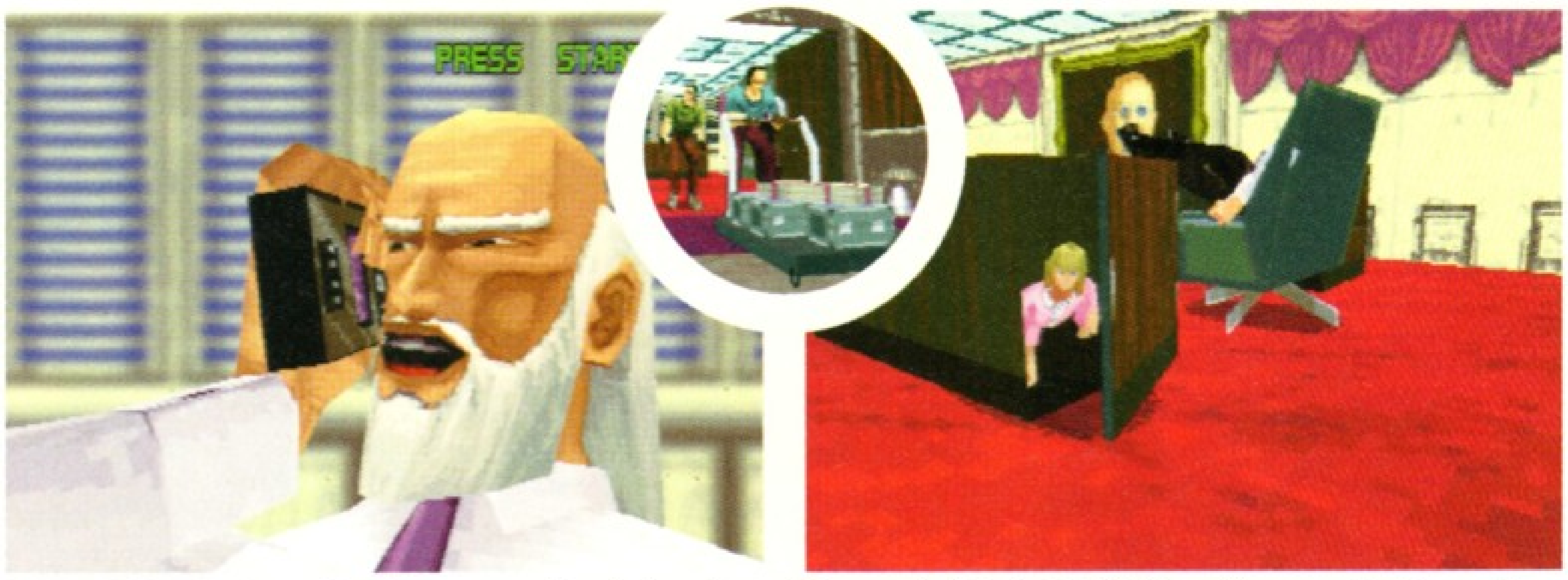
Comics moved into another age in the mid-eighties with such seminal works as Batman: The Dark Knight Returns, Watchmen and Frank Miller's acclaimed run on Daredevil. This ushered in the so-called "grim and gritty" era, where DC Comics eliminated their entire universe, destroying over 40 years of continuity and starting again in the controversial "Crisis on Infinite Earths" storyline. Marvel tried something similar. Spider-Man was relaunched disastrously by bringing back a long dead clone and getting rid of Peter Parker, and inventing a new super villain called Onslaught who killed most of the Avengers and the Fantastic Four, allowing them to be relaunched in a parallel universe, believe it or not. However, Marvel have seen the errors of their ways and have reinstated Peter Parker, killed the Spider-Clone (below) and are working to bring back the real Avengers and Fantastic Four.



DIE HARD ARCADE

How many consoles can claim to have TWO Die Hard games in their software catalogue? None but our very own Sega Saturn! Hah! And to think you nearly bought a PlayStation.

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	FIGHTING
RELEASE	FEBRUARY



The same 3D engine is used for the cut-scene bits. And no, the main bag guy isn't trying to talk into a video cassette. It's a radio.



This bonus game, a recreation of an ancient Sega coin-op called Deep Scan, is selectable from the title screen. Depth-charging the subs earns you extra credits in the main game.

If there's one thing we won't put up with here at Sega Saturn Magazine it's crime. Bank robberies, cattle-rustling, murdering the sheriff – it's all abhorent stuff to your right-thinking SSM buddies. Unfortunately, we're such a bunch of feeble, lazy, self-serving, low-life cowards we just can't seem to motivate ourselves to get involved in the never-ending battle against day-to-day evil that blights every street corner and common passageway.

Naturally it's a problem that causes us a lot of guilt, but, like the rest of Western civilisation, we find we can salve our whining consciences by taking part in imaginary crime-fighting. Die Hard Arcade was the AM1 team's contribution to our peace of mind – a coin-op in which you and a chum played at being members of a SWAT team, on a mission to rid a tall building of sinister terrorists and at the same time save the US President's daughter. Though DHA featured lashings of entertaining armed and unarmed combat the game wasn't a massive hit in the arcades, but the fact that it ran on Sega's very Saturn-like Titan hardware has made it a cinch to port it over to our favourite home system.

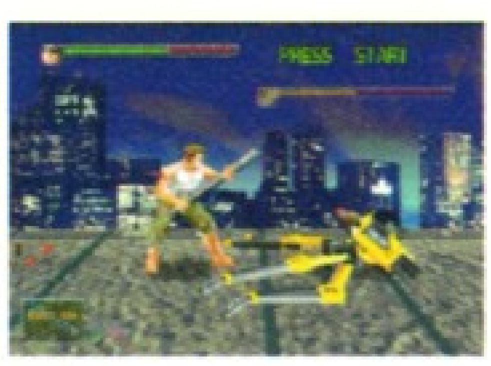


If you haven't played the arcade game, these screenshots full of three-dimensional, polygon-powered fight scenes might mislead you into thinking that Die Hard Arcade is yet another Virtua Fighter-style beat-'em-up. Not so. Die Hard Arcade is a fighting game, but the action is more reminiscent of older games like Final Fight or the Megadrive Streets of Rage series than more recent one-on-one beat-'em-ups. Enter a scene and you're surrounded by a crowd of bad guys who attack with fists and feet as well as knives, bottles, brushes and rocket launchers. You have to defend yourself in similar fashion, using those hand-to-hand combat skills they taught you in Police Academy (not the movie) as well as whatever dropped weapons come to hand. Even furniture turns out to be quite useful – there's not much to beat the thrill of smacking a terrorist right in his low brow with an antique grandfather clock.

As in more complex fighting games, you can inflict heavy damage even when you're not armed by using combinations of sequential button presses and joypad controls. Fireballs are off the menu, but it only takes a bit of practice before you can pull off cool wrestling moves such as throws, backdrops, suplexes and piledrivers. You can even incapacitate a foe with a





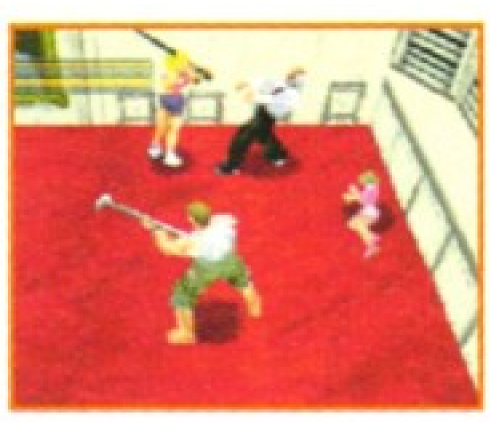


Die Hard Arcade. It's about fighting then.

What we have here is a super-slick arcade perfect conversion severely let down by a marked lack of lastability

NOW I HAVE THE GUN/AXE/BROOM!

While other fighting games force you to make do with mere hands and feet, Die Hard Arcade also lets you smack your foes around with just about anything that comes to hand. Because the building is full of terrorists there are firearms everywhere – some of them mightily heavy-duty – but you can cause damage just as easily with more innocuous items. Witness:



Golf clubs. Just the thing when you're feeling teed off. Fore! Smack!



Why don't you take a seat Mr Terrorist... In the face! Har har har!!



Grandfather clock. Beware, evil-doers – it's Payback Time! Bong!



The Broom of Doom. Wipe the floor with the criminal element!





If you can grab a bad guy while you're packing a pistol you can slap the cuffs on 'em...



In between fights you have to take on these reaction tests. Press the required button in time and...



One knee in the happy sack and that's that.



Boff! Pow! Aiieeee! Etcetera.



... Although if you're not quick enough they sometimes resist arrest!



... Success! Another terrorist who will live out his days eating prison food!

swift kick below the belt, which reduces them to hopping around clutching at their crotch! Most satisfying!

As the heroes rush from floor to floor the fighting action is broken up by reaction-testing challenges. Suddenly the action cuts away from the team to show something happening ahead of them, a bunch of terrorists emerging from a room perhaps. An instruction appears telling you to "PRESS KICK" and if you comply in time your character charges at the enemies and drop-kicks them to the floor. Fail and you have to stop and fight them hand-to-hand as usual. Other challenges see you dodging a speeding fire truck, evading rockets and jumping around elevators travelling up the side of the building.



Though it doesn't have the depth of gameplay of other Saturn fighting games, Die Hard Arcade still stumps up its fair share of entertainment. The action is fast and frantic and there's plenty of variety from scene to scene, in the enemies, the weapons and the moves. The action is easy to control and the various specials are simple to learn and instantly gratifying, making this a game that's well-suited to players who find the Virtua Fighters of this world too much to handle.

Being a pixel-perfect recreation of the coin-op does have its downside in the case of Die Hard Arcade, though. Any moderately-skilled player can finish the arcade game in a few credits or less and once defeated it's not a game you would readily come back to; the game is no different the second time through and because there's no score you don't really have anything to beat. If you're paying a couple of quid for the experience you're not going to be disappointed, but to shell out £45 for the luxury of playing Die Hard Arcade in your own home... Well I'm not sure that would be such a great idea.

The Saturn version doesn't even have any skill setting options, so there's no chance of increasing the challenge. In fact the only option you have is of making the game EASIER by playing the Deep Scan bonus game that earns you extra credits!

I don't really like criticising Die Hard Arcade because it makes an entertaining change from the usual Saturn fighting games and I did enjoy playing it, in both the single and two-player modes. Having finished it once I probably would play through it once or twice more to make sure I hadn't missed any of the moves, but after that...? Hmmm.

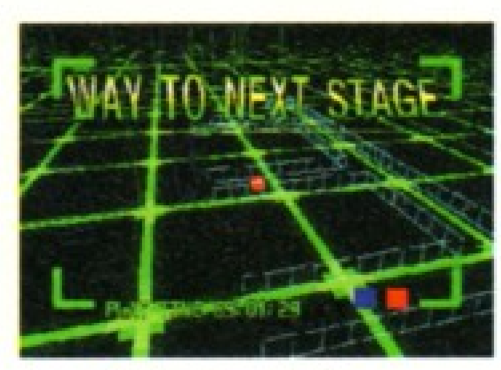
PAUL GLANCEY



But if you fail to act in time you have to duke it out with them as normal. Bummer!

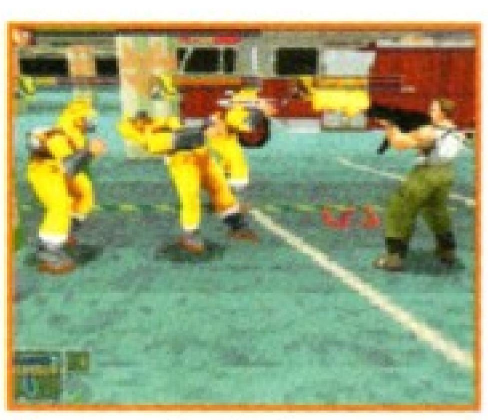


The climbing bit.

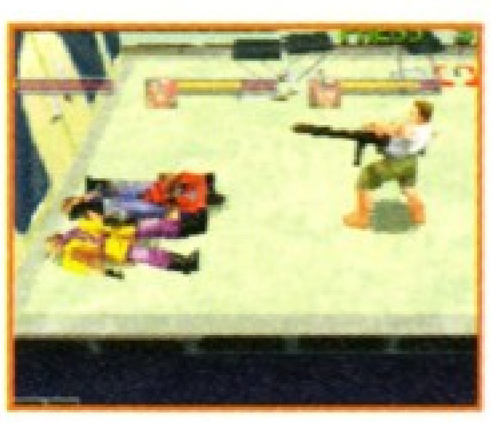


Some inter-level bits.

Die Hard Arcade offers tons of fun and the sheer enjoyment will bring you back - it's just too short from start to finish



Serves up hot lead nuggets, fresh from the Captain's machine gun.



Anti-tank rifle. No tanks around? This is just as effective on human scum!



The Rocket launcher. Not recommended for children under 36 months.



Yet more Rocket Launcher action. Why two pics? Because it's so ace.

A fun fighting game that's especially suited to novice players, but it's too short-lived for more experienced beat 'em up fans.

graphics	85
sound	80
playability	87
lastability	69

overall **80%**

CRUSADER: NO REMORSE

When this shoot-'em-up adventure was released on the PC last year it garnered much praise from critics and players alike, but how does it measure up on the Saturn? Why are we asking you?

BY	EA
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	FEBRUARY



Almost anything on the screen is destructible. What a mess.

Friends, as we approach the next millennium our civilisation stands at a crossroads, and we must choose between two possible futures. In one direction lies the pleasant 'Star Trek' scenario, in which the streets are clean, no-one's short of a fiver and we're all best mates with lumpy-headed aliens. In the other lies the 'depressing science fiction series' scenario, wherein big business and corrupt politicians own the entire world, enslaving the populace with secret narcotic additives in the water and crushing any rebellion with the aid of their indestructible Shadow Guards. Unfortunately, the latter scenario is where all the action will be, so it's not surprising that that's more or less where Crusader: No Remorse is set.

The plot is an cunning one. You play a Silencer, a cyborg heavy in the pay of the oppressive World Economic Consortium. During office hours you and your buddies stomp around in red armour shooting holes in members of the anti-WEC resistance until one fateful day when your squad is attacked and almost wiped out by a WEC assassin robot. In your cyber-grief you decide to defect to the resistance, but instead of welcoming you with open arms, the rebels turn out to be rather wary of an ex-Silencer trying to be their pal. However, they are prepared to let you prove your good intentions by sending you on ten tricky missions into WEC territory.



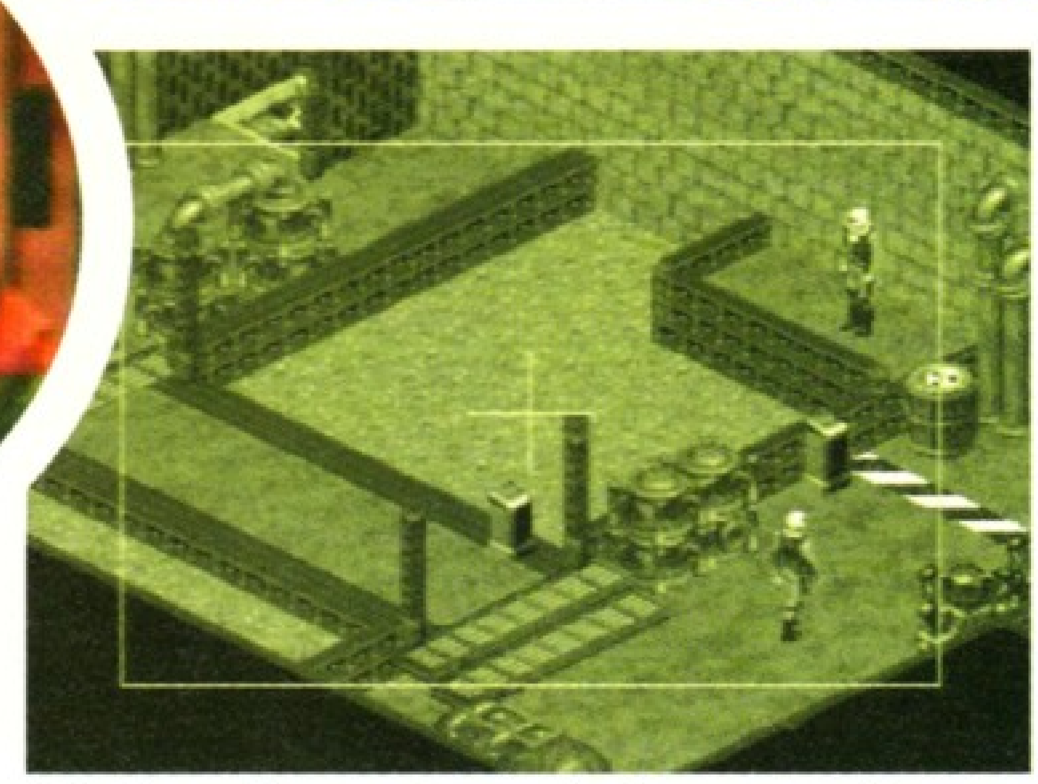
Infiltration is the name of the game. Break into WEC installations and explore mazes of corridors, store rooms, control centres and laboratories, searching for the lifts that take you from floor to floor. Your eventual goal is to locate a nerve centre which invariably contains some vital piece of machinery that wants blowing up. Along the way you get to 'pop a cap' in all who cross your path, be they lowly technicians or heavily-armed battle robots, then you can root through their pockets for keycards, weapons, ammunition and cash.

The isometric viewpoint Crusader uses isn't well-suited to the kind of intense shoot 'em up action that the game is aiming to provide.









Activating certain computer consoles give you a security camera's eye view of the action elsewhere in the complex. It usually means a door or force field has opened in this area.



KZZT! Electric barriers block the way.



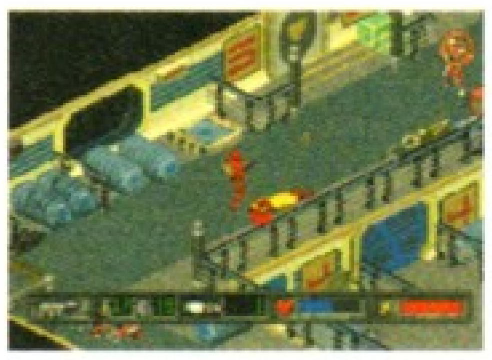
Security robots and teleporting guards! Aieee!



Special Guest Star: ED-209













Bang! So perish all who mess with the Silencer!



Just turn the handle to turn off the flames.



These cabinets replenish health and shields.



From this control console you can make that security droid do your bidding.



The graphics may look fine here, but when you see them moving it's hard to believe a Saturn is responsible for such juddery scrolling and wobbly sprites

Like most organisations preoccupied with plans of world domination, these WEC guys are terribly security-conscious. Everywhere there are intruder detectors that set off alarms and defense systems that electrocute. Force fields and locked doors are more of a problem, though and I'd say about 60% of the game is spent finding the keycard or the switch or the computer console that unlocks the next door. It's not usually that big a deal, because the switch is almost always in the same room as the door, or, at worst, the room next door. Working out how to open doors is about the only piece of brainwork you need to do throughout this game, so if the screenshots led you to expect some kind of taxing puzzle element, forget it.



Crusader is supposed to be an out-and-out blast - but it isn't. Hostile forces are generally thin on the ground, the pace of the action is slow and there's rarely a sense of danger or urgency about the proceedings. At most there might be two or three guys in a room and killing them without taking damage yourself is seldom challenging. They move slowly and predictably which makes them easy targets, especially as your weapons target semi-automatically.

The weapons are plentiful and grow more exotic as you progress. You start off with a machine gun but on later levels you can buy or pick up rocket launchers, laser rifles and guns that reduce your foes to piles of ash. You also get special weapons, such as robot spider bombs which you can set to wander into rooms and explode. You'd expect these to liven up the proceedings, but the general effect unspectacular mainly because the graphics used to illustrate the anticipated carnage aren't that spectacular. Also, many of the weapons, especially the specials, are rarely more useful than the basic machine gun. It's quicker and more effective to fire a few rounds at a robot, rather than dropping a land mine and hoping it eventually blunders over it.

If the adventure element in this game was stronger, with proper puzzles that worked along with the plot, I could probably forgive it its shortcomings.

If it's trying to be a mindless shoot-'em-up, though, Crusader: No Remorse is in need of a few key ingredients, like decent visuals, some variation in the gameplay, and a dash of excitement.

PAUL GLANCEY

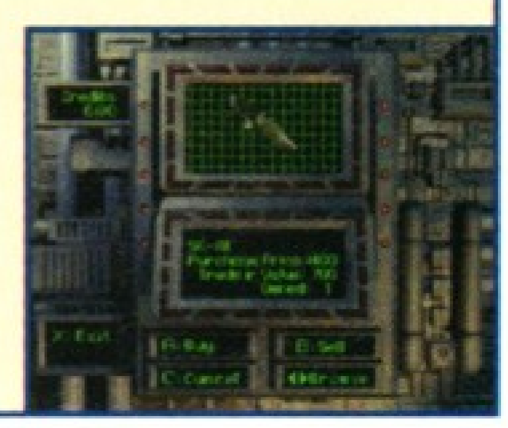
THE HIDDEN REBEL BASE

In between missions you're transported back to the rebel base to be briefed on your next mission. While you're here, though, you can also catch up on your email – always good for a bit of plot exposition, especially the stuff that isn't addressed to you but somehow ends up in your mailbox – and trade in those stolen credits and your unwanted weapons for some upgraded armaments in the gun shop.

The briefings are given in FMV windows, but don't expect anything remotely fancy because all you get is an actor in a uniform looking worried. Don't expect Saturn-standard full-screen action either – these are the sort of smallvision movies that used to be the norm in PC games of yesteryear.







A big but tedious game, which tries to get by on a combination of unimpressive blasting interspersed with very simple door-opening tests.

graphics	60
sound	78
playability	66
lastability	70
overall	68%

HEXEN

After the hideous debacle that was Doom, GT Interactive are back with the Saturn translation of pseudo-sequel Hexen. And guess what? It's actually really good.

BY	GT INTERACTIVE
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	DOOM/RPG
RELEASE	MARCH



Some of the Cleric's weaponry can siphon off energy for your own uses.







CHARACTER ACTOR

Three different characters are available to choose at the beginning of the Hexen adventure: Fighter, Mage and Cleric. The game itself doesn't change too much in terms of level layout and suchlike, but each class has its own range of weaponry to collect through the game. As you'd expect, the Mage is best suited to magical attacks (and his base level weapon has a ranged attack to it, which is very helpful for beginners), whilst the Fighter is more powerful and more inclined to bludgeoning his foes to death. As for the Cleric, well, he's somewhere in between.







Regular readers of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE will know that I personally have been extolling the virtues of Lobotomy Software's Exhumed - a game which features the definitive first person perspective 3D engine for the Sega Saturn. That game remains one of the greats without a shadow of a doubt, and in fact it is one of the greatest one-player adventure games money can buy.

A game that I have enjoyed immensely in the past is Raven Software's collaboration with id software, Hexen. id contributed their award-winning Doom engine (and provided some excellent enhancements, such as being able to fly and look up and down) whilst Raven have handed in their customary adventure game excellence. On PC, the game was a major, major hit. And deservedly so. What Doom lacked was depth (but made up for it with the multiplayer element). Hexen is undoubtedly superior in a conceptual way, combining the action of Doom with a large (indeed, vast) adventure. The biggest enhancement, though, is what has been called the "hub" system. Basically, instead of tackling each level in linear fashion (in the style of Doom and Quake), a variety of levels are connected to one main stage (the so-called hub) and revisitations to each level are required in order to make your way through. It adds greatly to what is already an impressive game.

The big question though concerns the quality of the 3D. Well, the good news is that Hexen is a huge improvement on Doom. Whereas that game was totally humiliated by a crap update and lack of detail (the PC original remains the best version by far), Saturn Hexen succeeds quite admirably in replicating the original game. The visuals are just about identical to the PC game, with only tiny visual aspects of the original lacking. This is a pretty substantial achievement - all of the misting and lava effects are in the game and

No doubt about it, Doom was a horrible travesty but GT Interactive have redeemed themselves with this great PC conversion!



The Fighter's Hammer is a good close range weapon, and charged with mana it has excellent long range power too.



Hexen action at its best - this game really is pretty cool.



In the swamps you can expect disgusting Tom Guise-esque creatures like this to pop up. Kill them all!



The Fighter is probably the character of choice for Hexen novices.













Close-range combat produces the most gory effects.



look cool. Also, the destructible scenery (such as the stained glass windows) is also fully in evidence.

The 3D update in these types of games is most important and in this regard Hexen is satisfactory. I'm not going to say that it's anywhere in the same league of smoothness and fluidity as Exhumed, because it isn't. But at least this time the game is actually moving fairly quickly and it's actually playable. It's just a shame that other developers haven't risen to the challenge that Lobotomy have issued with the superlative nature of the Exhumed engine. Still, at least we have Duke Nukem 3D (again from GT) to look forward to, which should revolutionise the first person perspective genre on the Saturn.

In the meantime though, purchasing Hexen looks like being a very promising proposition indeed. Developers Probe have managed to capture just about everything that made the original game so good and that being the case, Hexen is a game that's well worth checking out.

RICH LEADBETTER



The option to have the full score-bar on-screen is useful...



Magic staff attack!





Boom! Arghhh!



The Mage's weapons are the most powerful.



This arc-lightning weapon is absolutely devastating.

CONTROL FREAK

Hexen's controls are in actual fact a lot more complicated than Doom's... and yet this new game is a lot more controllable. Yes, despite the fact that Hexen has more objects to use and more magical bits and pieces you need to manipulate (plus the ability to look up and down), the game does a pretty wonderful job of giving you control. Typically, holding down a certain button in conjunction with either left or right chooses an item. Or a weapon. Yes, unlike Doom, Hexen actually allows you to move left or right through your weapons selection as opposed to the frantic button presses required in Doom. And if that isn't good enough. there are more control selections too.





The misting effects from the PC version are all in there.



Full-screen mode is cool.



A meanie-packed stage here.

The 3D's a bit jerky but bearable nonetheless, but more importantly, the "Hex-ellent" gameplay remains perfectly intact. A creditable conversion.

graphics	84
sound	78
playability	87
lastability	88

overall

88%

DIE HARD TRILOGY

Fans of the Die Hard movies must surely be on the brink of some kind of bio-electrical head-detonation incident this month as TWO new Saturn Die Hard games appear on the shelves. But is EA's Die Hard Trilogy any match for Sega's Die Hard Arcade?

BY	EA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	FEBRUARY

RECOMMENDED BY SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE 91%

GAME ONE: DIE HARD

John McClane is visiting his wife's office block in LA when it's over-run by terrorists! Packing only his 9mm Beretta pistol, McClane heads for the basement car park and sets to the task of wiping out the intruders. The map at the bottom-left of the screen indicates the location of the terrorists and civilian hostages who have to be rescued for extra points. Once all the terrorists are dead, a lift arrives with a bomb aboard and you get 30 seconds to find that lift and deactivate the bomb. That done you take the lift up to the next floor for more execution action. This section is as much about stealthy exploration as it is about shooting bad guys. McClane takes damage easily and you have to work out which rooms and cubby holes contain the extra weapons and armour.



GAME TWO: DIE HARDER

McClane is meeting his wife's plane at Washington, but the airport is over-run by terrorists! Whipping out his pistol, McClane once again dispenses lead-flavoured justice in a Virtua Cop-esque scenario. The screen shows McClane's point of view as he stalks the departure lounges seeking bad guys to blow away, hostages to save and weapons to blag. Though this part of the game doesn't have the smooth flow and crisp graphics of Virtua Cop, it's detailed and thoroughly action-packed. Gun control is via the joypad (tricky) or if you have a Virtua Gun or compatible you can use that. Cool!







Die Hard Trilogy uses three very different game-styles to represent the action in the three Die Hard movies. Even though all the games are completely different there is one common factor in their gameplay – heaps of destruction! Even the driving game, which is devoid of guns, is packed with explosions and mayhem!

There's no denying that Die Hard is one of the best action movies of all time. With its one-man-against-an-army plot, it practically WAS a video game in celluloid form (only with more swearing). Yet, in the nine years since the release of the first movie in the series, no-one has actually been able to produce a bullets-and-blood video game worthy of the Die Hard name. Frustrating.

Suddenly, though, Saturn-owning fans of the films have a choice of two first-rate Die Hard games, Sega's beat 'em up, based on its own arcade game, and this title from Fox Interactive via Electronic Arts, which attempts to capture the thrills and spills of all THREE of the Die Hard movies.

So many thrills! So many spills! How could veteran developers Probe Software pack them all in? What they've done is take sequences from each film and turn them into a trio of separately-played, 3D sub-games.

Representing Die Hard (the first movie) we have an arcade adventure in which hero John McClane hunts for terrorists in the corridors of the Nakatomi Tower. In second there's a Virtua Cop-style target-shooting game that takes place in Dulles Airport, Washington, where



Die Hard II was set. Thirdly, there's a full-on car chase through the streets of New York city, which is, in some small way, reminiscent of a few tense scenes from Die Hard With A Vengeance.

I referred to these as 'sub-games', but really that's doing them a disservice. 'Sub-game' is a term that usually describes some entertaining piece of whimsy that's meant to be a five minute diversion from some larger gaming task. The three sections in Die Hard Trilogy are so substantial that they could cut it as standalone titles - and pretty good ones too.

The first game is cleverly constructed so that you need to learn the layout of the building and plan your route from power-up to power-up and from hostage to hostage - trying to charge straight through a crowd of







Car parks are renowned for being places where nothing exciting ever happens. Not so in Die Hard Trilogy, game one, though!









Search Central Park and the streets of New York for hidden bombs. The red target shows where they're to be found.

GAME THREE: DIE HARDEST

Of the three games, I found this one was the most impressive. Here we find McClane in New York, playing a game of Simon Says with a deranged bomber, the brother of the criminal mastermind he defeated in the first movie. McClane commandeers a taxi with his new pal, Zeus (played by Samuel L Jackson in the movie), and he has to drive it through the city's grid of streets seeking hidden bombs. A direction finder atop the screen shows where the next bomb is and once he's found it, McClane has to ram it with his taxi to destroy it. To make things even harder, some bombs are attached to moving cars, and McClane has to engage in car chase excitement and smash it off the road! Remember, too, that there's a timer on each bomb and if McClane fails to destroy it in time a nuclear weapon goes off and New York is obliterated!
Once all of the bombs are cleared from the streets, McClane descends into the subway, racing his taxi against a truck, and then it's back to the surface, chasing yet more bombs in Central Park!





Target acquired!

Mercy bonus!

More targets, also acquired!

He's behind the taxi!



Find power-ups on the road – and the red-ringed bomb!



Die Hard Trilogy really is three distinctly different, high-quality action games in one.

terrorists with only a 9mm handgun to protect you just doesn't work. If the floor layouts were all the same this would be a tedious task, but they're all reasonably large and authentic-looking, and just about all of the scenery is satisfyingly destructible.

This part of the game also exhibits an impressive piece of game design, whereby walls become translucent as you approach them, giving an idea of who is lurking behind them. A neat trick, this, which gives you a heightened awareness of your surroundings.

The target-shooting game is more visually impressive, though, with its constantly-moving scenery, panicking civilians dashing across your line of fire and the rapid camera zoom-ins as you spot targets and take aim. I particularly liked the addition of the 'Mercy Shot': innocent folk caught in a blast run around engulfed in flames, and you can score extra points by, well, putting them out of their misery.

The third game, the driving extravaganza, was my favourite, though. At the wheel of your taxi you have licence to drive as madly as you want, totalling everything else on the road and messily wiping out pedestrians. The 3D environment here is as convincing as in any of the other games, but because you're moving so much faster it all feels much more exciting.

Die Hard Trilogy really is three distinctly different, high-quality action games in one. Often when you see compilations like this there's usually one section that stands out as the one that the programmers thought of first and lavished the most attention on, but all three sections of Die Hard Trilogy have their fair share of thrills, great visuals and clever ideas. The result is an excellent package, which offers an unfeasible amount of 'bang' for your 'buck'.

PAUL GLANCEY

Three terrific action games for the price of one. One of the best movie-licence games ever to hit the Saturn.

graphics	92
sound	73
playability	90
lastability	92

overall 91%

GRID RUN

All right, smart guy, so it's not a very imaginative title. But if you were programming a game in which the players had to run around grids, what would you call it?

BY	VIRGIN
PRICE	£34.99
STYLE	RUNNING ABOUT
RELEASE	FEBRUARY




Two player mode in action. The split-screen scrolling works very nicely indeed. Well done, you programming johnnies!



Here's Axel, hero of Grid Run, with his 'female companion' whose name we forget. If Axel ever wants to see her again he's going to have to prove himself the master of 'Grid Running'.





FLAG DUELLING

If Grid Run's 15 computer opponents get too predictable for you, you can always try facing off against a human opponent. The screen is split horizontally to show the flag-grabbing doings of the two protagonists during 28 two-player rounds. The gameplay is pretty much the same as it is in single player mode, except that this time you seem to get more spikey protecto-balls. In fact, playing against another person doesn't feel much different to playing against one of the CPU characters, which is probably testament to the quality of Grid Run's artificial intelligence routines.





What games did you buy your Saturn to play? Cool Sega arcade conversions? NiGHTS? Well, whatever it was we bet you didn't buy a Saturn to play a space-age version of Tag, and that's pretty much what you're getting in Grid Run. Could Virgin be taking the 'Old Games Are The Best' tack here? Or is this one of those games that reviewers used to call 'Brilliantly Simple and Simply Brilliant', as if they'd just thought of that themselves?

The introductory FMV would have you believe that you're a space explorer who has been captured by a sinister alien lady while exploring an abandoned spacecraft. Apparently, your only hope of survival is to take part in a gladiatorial contest of 'Capture The Flag' against all sorts of oddball alien species.

The contests take place on pathways and islands arranged in grids which are suspended over various unhealthy substances such as boiling lava. Dotted around the grids are flags, and to survive each level you have to claim a quota of flags by touching them. If your opponent reaches his quota before you reach yours, you lose and it's into the alien oven you go. Succeed and you're into the next round. If you survive three rounds you're whisked away to a bonus round, thence onward to another planet and three moure levels.

A match is played thus. The competitors start near to each other on the grid and as soon as you're both released you have to rush to claim a flag before your opponent. If he gets to a flag before you do, you're declared 'IT' and a cross appears above your head. As 'IT' you can't capture any more flags, so you have to chase after the other guy and tag him. Then he becomes 'IT' and you get the chance to reclaim all the flags he just claimed. Thus it continues until one of you bags the required number of pennants, and the other is ground into the dust of defeat like a steen-keeng peeg.

But there's more to it than that. As well as the usual genetic sampling and rectal probing, the alien abduction process seems to have included empowerment with magical abilities. There are six special tricks you can use to aid your progress, but each of them

There's no escaping the fact that, what you're playing here is Tag with a few extra bits.



It's Axel versus Krayken, water-beast of Aquar IV!



Teleports activated! The battle with Belok of Ash begins!



Your opponent has nearly got all the flags!



The arrow indicates where to find your opponent.









For the benefit of beginners, Grid Run has a help mode that tells you what's happening.

Grid Run has been compared to Hudsonsoft's Bomber Man, but while the action is more frantic the strategy element doesn't work as well here.

draws on your magic supply whenever you use them. Your magic recharges slowly but you can boost it by picking up the balls that are bouncing on the pathways.

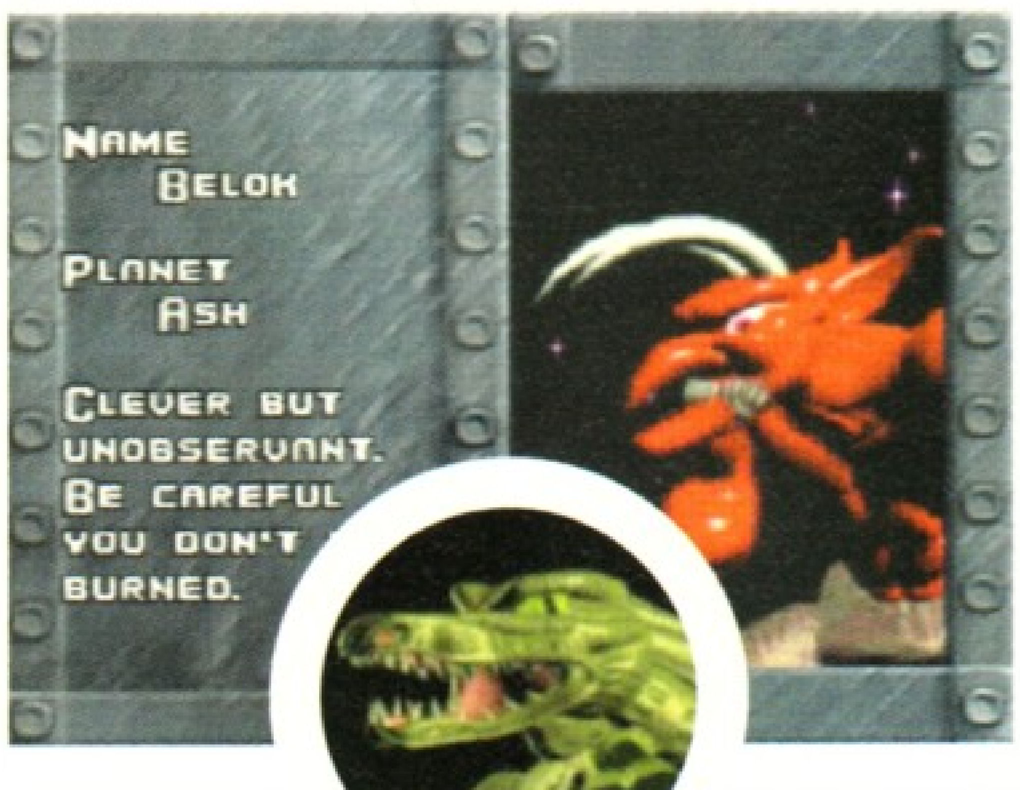
There are other helpful items on the pathways, teleporters for instance, that you can use to zip from place to place when the other guy is bearing down on you. There are also spinning shields that obliterate obstacles as you run into them.

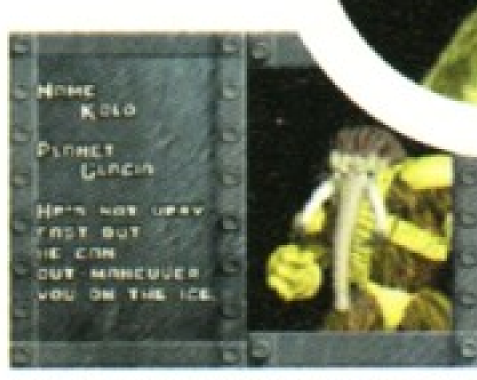
The hourglasses you pick up during each tournament are turned into seconds should you reach the bonus stage. Every hourglass gives you five more seconds, during which you have to grab as many balls as possible. At the end of the bonus game the balls are added up and each differently-coloured ball adds to your abilities in the next tournament. Red balls give you more magic, blue balls provide more speed and green gives greater agility.

All these fripperies, as well as a two-player mode and very good graphics and sound provide adequate jazzing-up services to an otherwise simplistic game. Now, of itself, simplicity is no crime: Tetris was incredibly simple and everybody liked that. But Grid Run isn't quite in the Tetris Addictiveness League. As a 'party game' Grid Run has been compared to another simple game, Bomber Man (soon to appear on Saturn, incidentally), but while the action is probably more frantic than that of the Hudsonsoft classic, it's not quite as entertaining mainly because there's no escaping the fact that what you're playing here is Tag with a few extra bits. With Bomber Man there was a bit of strategy to the gameplay; the strategic elements in Grid Run don't seem to gel somehow. And it was much more satisfying to blast your opponent to smithereens than it is to simply keep out of his way and collect flags.

Oh, this isn't a bad game, though. It's kind of fun and it's done with a flourish. But would I buy it in preference to a cool Sega arcade conversion or NiGHTS? Nah. Don't think so.

PAUL GLANCEY



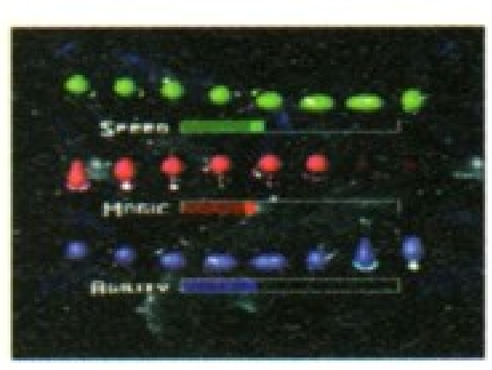


CPU opponents have their own strengths and weaknesses.



Krayten is oblivious to all spells except the slow-down.





The more hourglasses you collect, the more time you get in the bonus game. Boost your speed, magic and agility by grabbing coloured balls.

SPELL TO GET WELL

The key to success in Grid Run is learning to use your spells successfully. All of them have only a temporary effect, and each uses a different amount of your magic energy.



Speed up - Outrun opponents with ease! Better used on long pathways - the extra speed is harder to manage in corners.



Teleport - Escape in a trice! Transports you to the nearest teleport pad. Extremely handy when the other guy is closing in.



Slow Down - A fusillade of blue pellets seek out your opponent and temporarily slow his pace to a crawl.



Bridge - The only way to cross gaps to unreachable flags. Takes a moment to cast, leaving you vulnerable for a short time.



Zap - Obliterates obstacles such as mines or spiky balls. A barrage of shots knocks your opponent backwards slightly.



Mine - Dump a spiky crystal behind you to block your opponent's path. Knocks them down for a moment if they hit it.



It's always nice to see something unusual, but Grid Run isn't destined to be a classic.

graphics	85
sound	88
playability	79
lastability	77

overall **79%**

ANDRETTI RACING

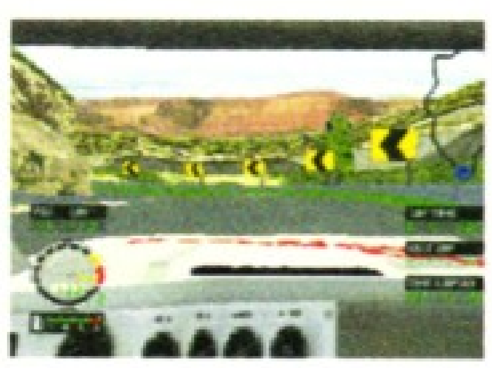
Already released on the PlayStation to a lukewarm response, Andretti Racing now makes its Saturn appearance just in time for the start of the motor racing season, though I doubt it was planned to coincide that way.

BY	EA
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	DRIVING
RELEASE	OUT NOW

CLIPPING PROBLEMS?

Well not really, the headline is there merely to grab your attention. In general the clipping is unnoticeable due to the tight and twisty nature of the circuits. However racing at the ovals is quite different with the clipping being very obvious and not to the standards set by Daytona CCE.









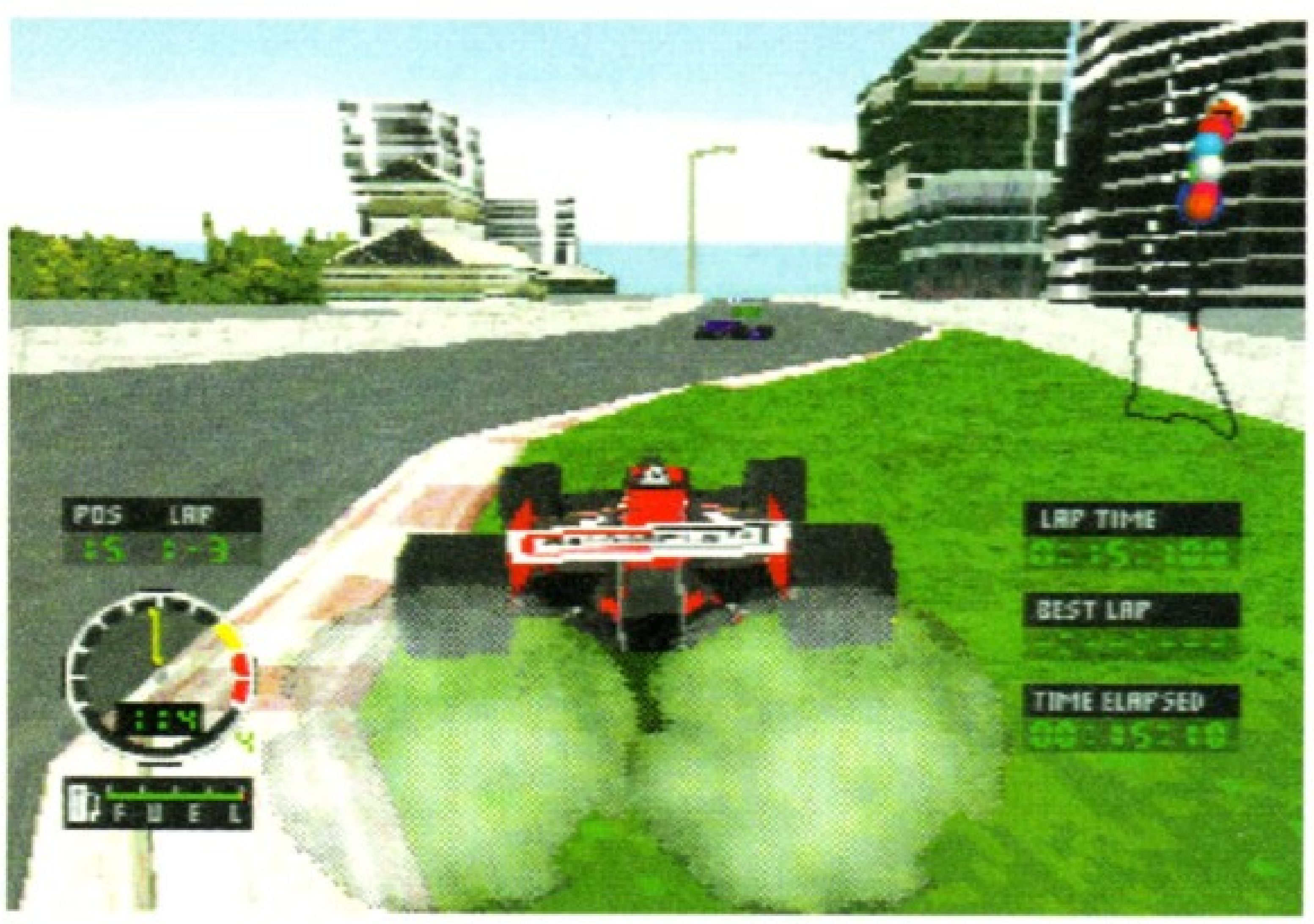


It must be said that I am a huge fan of motor racing and likewise of the driving game genre. For me Sega Rally is the ultimate home console driving game unrivalled, at least for the time being on any other console. Even now more than a year on from its UK release it is still possibly the game I play the most. The fact that it hasn't been bettered in the last year is in no detriment to other games but testament to how awesome Rally is. To be honest until we see some sort of 3D accelerator card for the Saturn I really can't see it being beaten. It's that good. As such it is the landmark title which, rightly or wrongly all other driving games are judged by. That brings us back nicely to the matter in hand, EA's Andretti Racing.

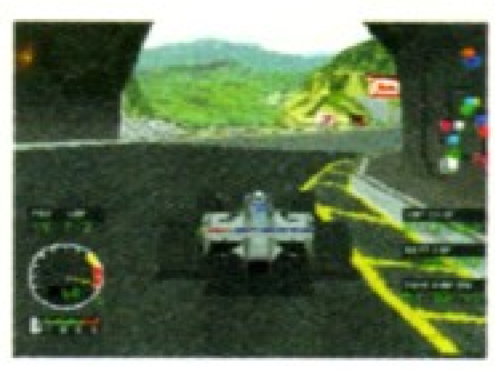
On paper this looks like a top game, so despite the sniggers around the office I was actually quite looking forward to it. The game itself takes its name from the former Indy Car and Formula One world champion Mario Andretti, whom through his overactive loins has spawned an entire family of racing car drivers. And that just about reaches the limits of my knowledge on the subject. From first glance it would appear that Andretti Racing has all the ingredients needed to give Rally a good run for its money with its wealth of options and different game variations.

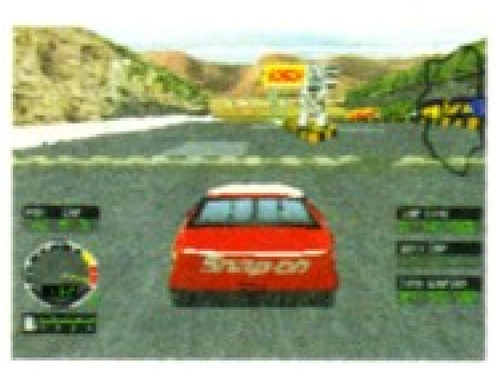
What makes Andretti stand out from other driving games is that it features real racing car drivers racing on real tracks. There are 16 different ones too, meaning that total mastery of each of them will take a very long time indeed. There are two different vehicles to choose from, an Indy Car and a stock car which each have their individual handling characteristics, top speed and gear variations. These can also be customised to your personal taste, allowing you to tamper with the transmission, tyres, aerodynamics and gear ratio. Two gameplay variations have found their way into the game, the exhibition race which is a one

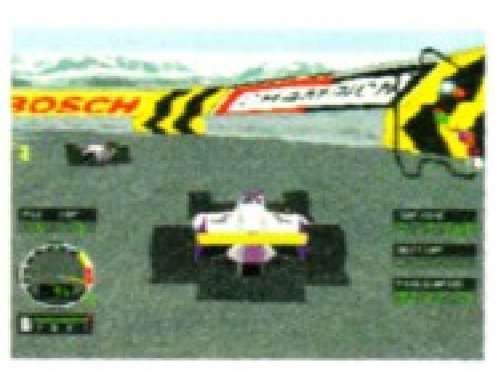




Swerving violently off the road not only loses you places but produces a large puff of smoke too.









During the course of the race you are required at some point to pit for fuel and tires as well as being given the opportunity to adjust the car's aerodynamics. Upon entering the pit lane the CPU takes over and switches to the blocky in car view.







The cars featured in Andretti Racing have nowhere near the amount of detail seen in the likes of Daytona and Rally and brings down the overall look of the game. Also take a good look at the clipping as it really is quite bad on the ovals.

VIRTUA VIEWS

There are three different views to choose from in Andretti Racing. There's the in car perspective which reduces your field of view considerably making it difficult to see corners ahead. The popular chase perspective is in there with the camera just behind the car and the slightly further back than chase perspective which allows you to see much further down the road than the previous two.









A potentially life threatening, Ayrton Senna style high speed, bone crunching head on collision is imminent methinks.





What makes Andretti Racing stand out from other driving games is that it features real racing car drivers racing on real tracks.

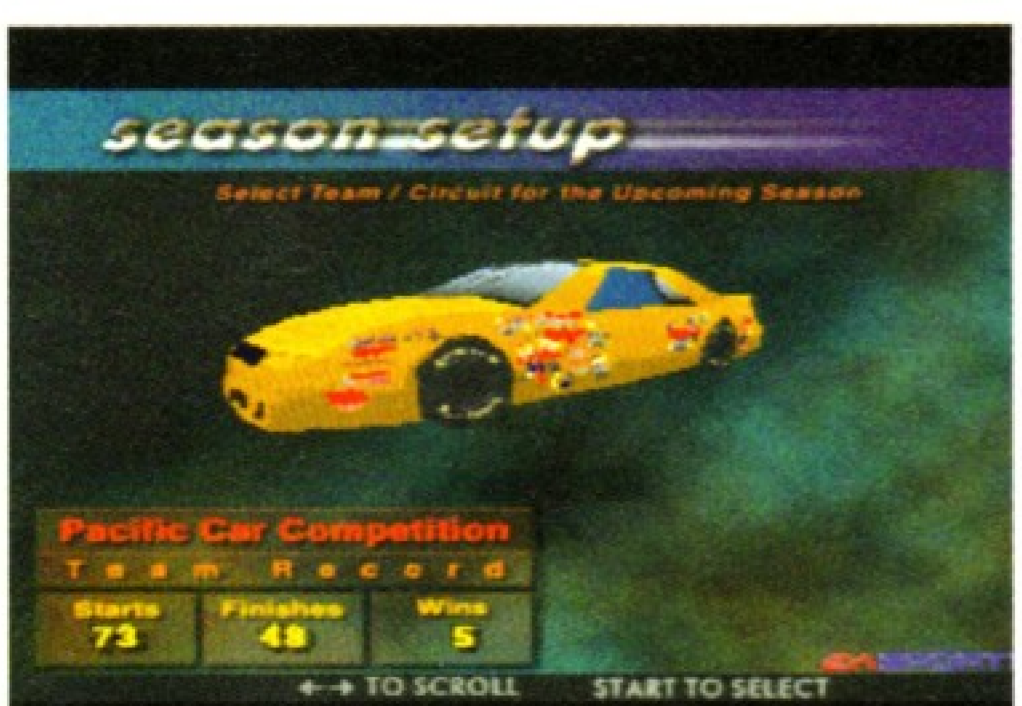
off practice race and the career option which takes you through all 16 tracks amassing points in a championship like way. Also available to give you a helping hand is the racing school option which, as it suggests is a school of racing where you are taught various racing techniques by none other than the Andretti family themselves through a series of FMV snippets. Once you're racing you'll find that three views have been included, the in car view, the chase perspective and a slightly further back view, though only the latter two are really playable.

This all sounds pretty impressive but is this the game to topple the mighty Rally? In a word "no". Andretti racing is a bit of a let down. The loading times are frankly atrocious taking what seems like an eternity to load from one options screen to the next before finally getting down to any racing action. Though there is a huge amount of tracks available they are all a bit of a concrete fest. Each of the 16 tracks and the track side scenery are in a varying shade of grey making each of them appear dull and indistinguishable from one another. The frame rate is respectable but the game fails to deliver the adreneline pumping feeling of speed which is a must for driving games. The clipping is generally of a good standard with the notable exception of the oval race track which reminds us somewhat of the original Saturn Daytona and some glitching occurs when racing through the tunnel sections. The crashes are not very spectacular, with the fender bending damage your car takes mysteriously morphing back to its original shape. The cars themselves are lacking in detail and bear an uncanny resemblance to those seen in Time Warner's Virtua Racing adding somewhat to the overall tatty appearance. A special mention must also go to the PAL conversion, or lack of it. The game has obvious black borders which squash the picture making the cars look almost flat. Usually this is a trade off for optimising the speed but that hasn't been retained either.



However Andretti Racing does remain very playable with the various options and huge amount of tracks providing a very lengthy challenge but it seems to be a victory for quantity over quality. My advice if you are after a top racing game is buy Rally now or wait and see how the awesome looking Manx TT turns out.

LEE NUTTER



The car set-up screens are rendered in high resolution and look very, very nice indeed.



Apparently this version is supposed to be smoother than the PlayStation version, but it's not as smooth as Rally.

With a wealth of options there's enough to keep you at it for a long time but it pales in comparison to the awesome Sega Rally and Daytona CCE.

graphics	80
sound	77
playability	88
lastability	86
overall	83%

TILT!

Hitler only had one, but this new three-dimensional pinball game lets you play with FIVE! We wondered, could Virgin's Tilt! be a pinball wizard? Or a "mere bagatelle"? Read on, and these words will reveal the answer.

BY	VIRGIN
PRICE	£34.99
STYLE	PINBALL
RELEASE	FEBRUARY

Once we were happy to shoot letter 'O's with full stops in the pretence that we were playing Space Invaders. These days, it seems, a video game isn't a video game unless it owes some part of its creation to Silicon Graphics Inc. Rendered intros, rendered characters, rendered you-name-it-and-they'll-render-it. By way of example, here's Tilt!, a pinball game which has a 3D Silicon Graphics-rendered pintable. In fact there's not just one - there are six of 'em!



Now there's not much to say about pinball that you probably don't know already. Launch the ball, keep it in play with the flippers that guard the exit hole, and score points by hitting the targets on the table and firing the ball through ramps in the required order.

Unlike some pinball games which are somewhat lacking in variety, Tilt! has been modelled on more recent, themed, feature-packed pins, so you get copious combination shots to master, with all sorts of big-point rewards and hidden bonuses to uncover. The tables also have a simulated LED video display at the top, which, as well as showing your score, also displays messages and graphics telling you which shot you have to go for next, or which shot you've just pulled off. On some tables, combinations activate a mini game that you have to play on the video screen using your flipper buttons to control the action. Other tables have a surface-mounted ball shooter in the shape of a revolver or a dragon's head which you can control at certain points in the game.

All sounds pretty authentic, huh? Well, it is, and NMS Software have tried to make Tilt! even more like the real thing by letting you view the action in 3D, as if you were standing in front of the table.

This allows you to see the networks of ramps and underpasses as they would appear in real life, and it does make some shots easier. For the most part, though, it doesn't work that well because some features block your view of the ball. In real life you can move around to change your view of the table, but Tilt! keeps your head locked in one position. The scrolling 2D mode is more than adequate, though, and fortunately it moves fast enough to keep up with the ball - ie. very fast indeed.

The speed and feel of the game are beyond reproach. Just about everything you'd expect from a decent pintable is in here, and it plays about as well as you could expect a computer pinball game to play. The six tables are all cleverly designed, and all six proved really addictive. You won't just be jumping from table to table, either. I spent whole sessions on one table, finding the combinations and honing my skills before moving on to the next.

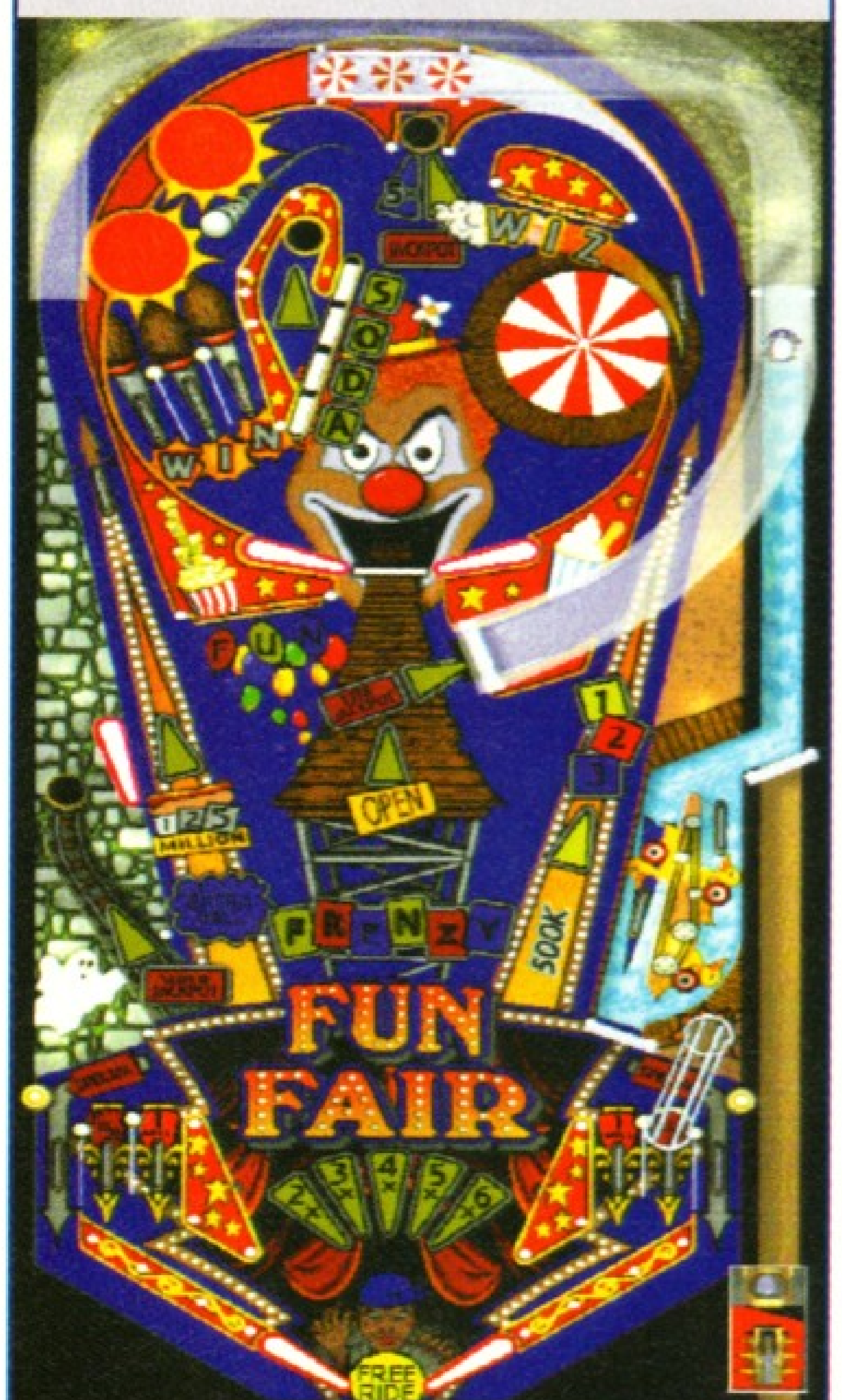
The only thing I really missed in Tilt! was the noise. Every pinball table I've ever played has been a riot of overpowering sounds and corny sampled voices, but Tilt!'s are relatively reserved. Some tables don't give you much more than the "ching!" of the bumpers. What I want is voices shouting, "Ri-i-de the Ferris Whee-ee-eel!!" and other such stuff.

So, more noises in Tilt! 2, please, but until that turns up, I'll just be in the games room...

PAUL GLANCEY

FUN FAIR

Amuse yourself with repeated ramp shots – the Hot Dog Loop and the Right Hand Loop are the profitable ones – then hit the F-U-N drop targets to open the gate to the fair at the centre of the table. The ball lock takes the form of a Ferris Wheel – fill the carriages and prepare for madcap multi-ball action.





THE MONSTER

Collect enough body parts to get the zombie monster off his slab at the top-right of the table! Hit the mummy targets, raid the coffins and slap down the gravestones to rack up the points. There's even a 3D sub-game that plays on the video at the top of the table – steer your truck, past 20 spooks for a massive bonus!





ROADKING USA

A road trip across the USA – in pinball form! Drive from San Francisco to New York, revving up your engine by hitting bumpers at the top of the table. A ramp shot at the foot of the table puts Smokies on your tail, and once you've collected as many as possible, go for the ramp next-door to lead them on a max-points police pursuit. Drop the ball in Al's Autos to activate bonuses.



STAR QUEST 2049

A relatively high-scoring table, this one – on my first go I hit 394,518,610 points. That's not surprising though, because you get at least a million points just for shooting the ball - the launch ramp takes it straight into a bonus 'airlock'. The big points, and the easy ramp shots make this table ideal for beginners.



MYST AND MAJIK

A knights/armour scenario in which combos send you on quests for treasure, wake dragons and bring on hordes of Orcs - once an Orc attack has started you have to slay them with repeated ramp shots! Another combo sends the ball into the dragon's mouth and you have to aim its head so that it spews the ball at a tricky target. The castle is a good choice; drop the targets that spell SIEGE and every bumper you hit earns 1,000,000 points!



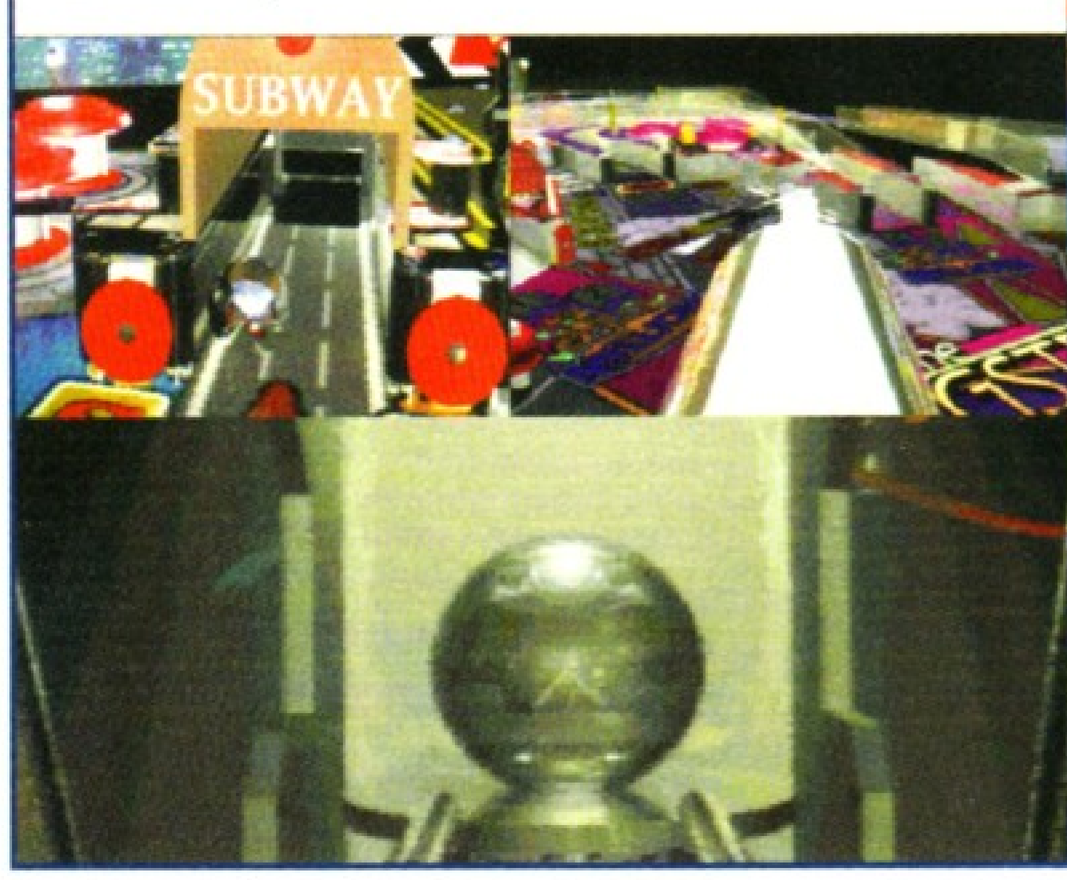
GANGSTER

Line up the ball for one of the dozens of skill shots on this table: knock down G, U and N to initiate a bank raid and send the ball up the back of the table to the moonshine still that doubles as a ball lock. There's even a gun on the table that acts as a bonus ball launcher... for special occasions.



GLORIOUS PIN-VISION!

Pull off certain high-scoring shots and you get a pleasant 3D animation of the ball rolling into Pointsville. Don't worry, purists, you can turn them off if you want to.







The 3D mode isn't all its cracked up to be, but this is still a fine pinball game.

graphics	89
sound	80
playability	90
lastability	90

overall **89%**

SOVIET STRIKE

It's been a long time coming but it looks as if the wait has been worth it as EA bring home the premiere 32-bit outing of the fine Strike series, already a big hit on the PlayStation. But how does the Saturn version compare?

BY	EA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	FEBRUARY

RECOMMENDED BY SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE 90%

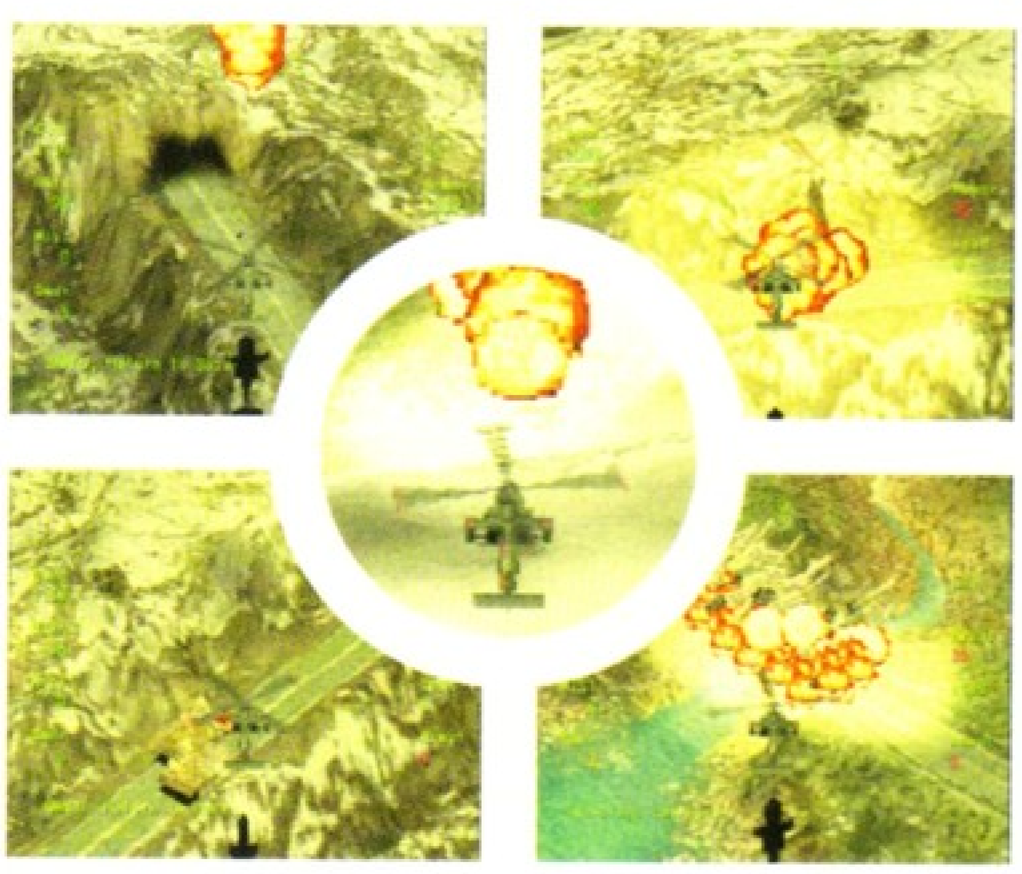



BOKKAROONIE! Unleash a couple of missiles and watch those buildings burst into bits! Now pick through the rubble for goodies.

POWER-UPS

As in the previous three Strikes, your Apache helicopter is not invincible. So it becomes essential to collect the various power ups to assist you in your quest for world peace. There are three different types of power-ups to collect. Armour repair to restore you back to full health, extra ammo for when you are running low and fuel to keep your bird in the air. Some of these can be seen on the map, others are hidden in buildings. The only way to get them is to destroy the buildings and retrieve the items therein.





These shots give you some idea of how spectacular the explosions are and also how close they are to those seen in the PlayStation version. Unleashing a couple of your newly equipped sidewinders has a devastating effect but it looks pretty cool, setting the whole screen alight.

What undoubtedly made the Strike series so great were the cool graphics, simple mission structure, the depth of the gameplay and its sheer lastability. To create a worthy successor to this exceptional series on the 32-bit consoles must have been a task and a half for EA. But they appear to have pulled it off, creating a game that will appeal to fans of the prequels and novices alike. And with this being a 32-bit game, EA are able to utilise the power of the Saturn to incorporate new elements into the gameplay and make it visually more appealing.

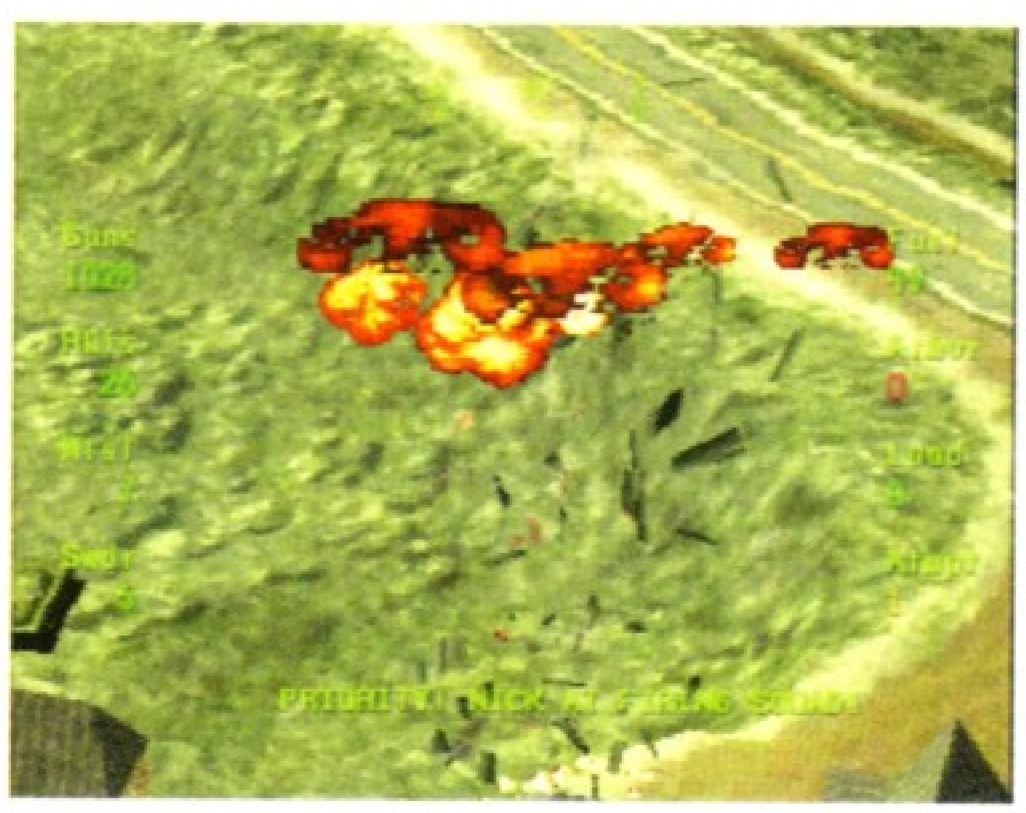


Soviet Strike is set in the former Soviet Union where evil rumblings are afoot. A powerful ex-Soviet General known as The Shadowman is attempting to return the newly democratic Russia to its former communist status. It is your task to overthrow this psychopathic mad man, thus averting World War Three and restoring peace and harmony to the land.

To aid you in this mammoth task you are fully equipped with a state of the art Apache helicopter armed to the teeth with an array of weapons. These weapons will appear familiar to veterans of the prequels as they are largely unchanged. But in addition to the machine gun, missiles and rockets EA have thought to include a weapon capable of even more destruction, side-winders. These can destroy just about anything the enemy can throw at you but alas you only have eight of them so they ought not to be wasted. You will also find yourself ably assisted by your fellow members of the Strike team who convey information to you via the Strike.net, an on board computer interface which provides you with mission briefings and updates you with sub-missions. These often come in the form of some excellent Command and Conquer style FMV which spice up the proceedings a fair bit and the acting isn't too bad either.

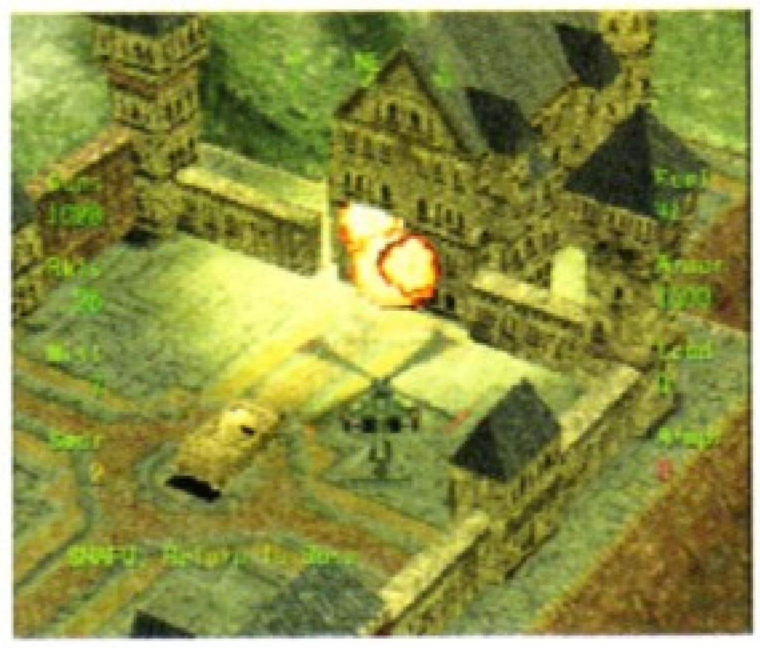
The graphics have been brought up to date and feature some superb 3D photo-realistic landscapes,

The graphics have been brought up to date and feature some superb 3D photo-realistic landscapes.









(Right) The final mission on the first level requires you to infiltrate the enemy base and blow it to pieces whilst fending off enemy attacks. All in a day's work for these guys.

ANALOGUE COMPATIBLE



The analogue pad that was made widely available at the same time as NiGHTS is finally being put to use by third party developers as can be seen here in Soviet Strike. It works just as well as the standard pad but truth be known I actually prefer using the d-pad. At the end of the day it's down to personal preference. But then I prefer the British pads to the Jap ones despite popular opinion to the contrary in the office. Strange but true.

The gameplay is largely unchanged from its predecessors, with the same search, destroy and rescue style of objectives.

detailed enemy drones and some nice explosions too. The standard overhead view featured in the three prequels makes a welcome return along with an all new second viewpoint which rotates the screen around the helicopter. This has the effect of allowing you to target hidden enemies far easier than with the normal view. The frame rate however isn't that great with the game being slightly on the jerky side, a criticism levelled at the PSX version too. Also noteworthy is the fact that no longer do you bump into buildings damaging your health as you simply fly over them.

The gameplay is largely unchanged from the prequels with the same search, destroy and rescue type of objectives spread across the five different levels. The missions are well structured with sub-missions popping up all over the place in a much more random way to what they had done previously. The artificial intelligence of the enemies has been enhanced making them a much more intelligent and tricky opponent to beat. As if this wasn't enough to contend with you also need to find fuel, ammo and armour repair if you are to stand any chance of finishing the game. Many of these are hidden underneath buildings and can only be retrieved by blasting them until they are reduced to rubble.

But the question you all want answered is how does it match up to the PlayStation version? Well the Saturn version is actually quite a bit better as it has more features and action as well as improved special effects. There are in fact at least 16 new Saturn features which improve upon the shortcomings of the PSX version. (See this month's massive Soviet Strike Showcase for more details). However I do have some reservations as to the lastability of Soviet Strike as there are only five levels. This means that despite the tough gameplay it only provides a relatively short challenge in comparison to the lengthy challenge offered by it's predecessors. But overall Soviet Strike comes across as a very playable and enjoyable game and a worthy addition to the Strike series.

LEE NUTTER



Outnumbered and outgunned, the words imminent death spring to mind.











Hidden away in the sheds are the US hostages, but we dislike Americans so leave 'em there.



A well aimed sidewinder crashed to earth only to reveal it has in fact missed all the targets.



There's no more bumping into buildings or bridges anymore.

A worthy addition to the Strike series with enhanced gameplay and superior visuals. And it's better than the PlayStation version too, which is always a good thing.

graphics	92
sound	90
playability	89
lastability	82

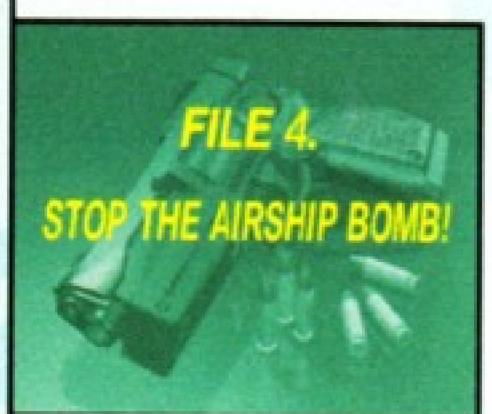
overall **90%**

SEGA SATURN™ tips

Once again SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE returns to the fray with a huge amount of tips, cheats and all manner of loveliness. Mostly for NBA Jam Extreme we're afraid. Still, at least you can get to play as Janet and Smarty in Virtua Cop 2, which is a lovely little cheat if ever there was one. If you can match these, send in your letters to: TIPS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. It all changes next month though when we move to London Docklands.... Hmmm.

VIRTUA COP 2

While you may think that you can only access the three main levels from the stage select screen, you can actually open File 4: Stop the Airship Bomb – the final boss level! To do this, go to the stage select screen as usual, but instead of shooting one of the level boxes, shoot the arrow which comes off the bottom of the stage 1 box. Keep shooting it over and over until the timer runs out, and you should begin at the end of the game!



If you're getting bored of playing as Rage all the time in one-player mode, there's a cheat to let you choose your character. On the stage select screen, hold down X, Y, or Z on the pad while picking your level. X chooses Michael "Rage" Hardy, Y chooses James "Smarty" Cools, and Z chooses Janet "Hubcaps" Marshall.



An extra Options plus menu can be obtained by simply finishing the game on any difficulty setting above Easy. On this menu are some question marks which need to be cleared in order to use the options – the best of which is Big Head mode! To turn this option on you need to have played the game a total of 58 times. The easy way to get to this number is to put the game on Hard setting, with one life and no continues. Just start the game and you should be killed by the first enemy, then choose not to continue. Start the game again, and repeat until the option appears.



BUST-A-MOVE 2

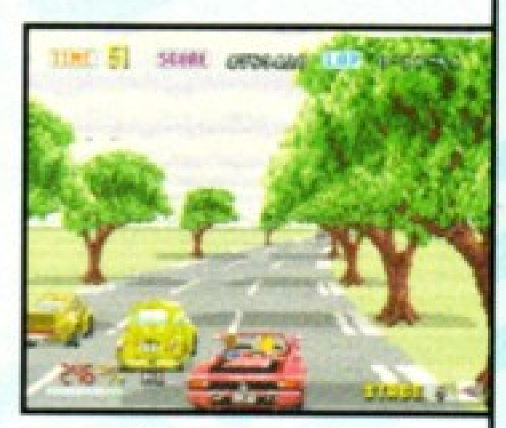
It's a bit late now, we admit, but if you play the game during December, the intro sequence has different music and is all Christmas-like. If you want to get back into the festive spirit, just change the date in your machine to December and start the game up.

SEGA AGES: OUTRUN

To get a secret Cornering option which lets you increase your grip, hold the A+C buttons and go into the options menu. It should be sitting there, waiting for you to fiddle with.

To turn it the game into an even more accurate arcade conversion, press and hold A+C+Start on controller 2 when the Sega logo appears at the start of the game. Now you can pretend to insert coins by press the L button on controller 1!





Sega Ages recently shot straight to number one in the HMV charts. Good.

DOOM

While the game may be one of the worst on the Saturn, there are bound to be a few of you who were foolish enough to buy the game after looking at the PC screenshots on the box and haven't yet taken it back to the shop. For those of you, here are passwords for all of the levels, including the secret ones. As an added bonus, you'll start almost every level with 200% health, 200% armour, and all of the weapons!

2. Nuclear Plant	CR!3WDD3DB
3. Toxin Refinery	H6670JBQJG
4. Command Control	03LTJOY!02
5. Phobos Lab	H33!1HFTHK
6. Central Processing	04MSKZX9Z1
7. Computer Station	H4492GDSGJ
8. Phobos Anomaly	09SMBY04YW
9. Deimos Anomaly	H994VFHMFC
10. Containment Area	0!TLCXZ3XV
11. Refinery	H!!3WDGLDB
12. Deimos Lab	07QPDW26WY
13. Command Centre	C33VMWFTHK
14. Halls of the Damned	08RNFV15VX
15. Spawning Vats	H885YBJNBD
16. Hell Gate	FGZY5MMYMP
17. Hell Keep	HXX07TMHTA
18. Pandemonium	0YFGR93Z97
19. House of Pain	HYYZ8SLGSQ
20. Unholy Cathedral	0VBKS8628!
21. Mt. Erebus	HVV29RPKRT
22. Limbo	0WCJT75179
23. Tower of Babel	HWW1!QNJQS
24. Hell Beneath	01JCL68W64
25. Perfect Hatred	YBBKS88K8!
26. Sever the Wicked	02KBM57V53
27. Unruly Evil	H22V4NQBNL
28. Unto the Cruel	0ZGFN4!Y46
29. Twilight Descends	HZZY5MTFMP
30. Threshold of Pain	00HDP39X35
31. Entry Way	H00X6LSDLN
32. Underhalls	YQ76XCCPCF
33. The Gantlet	Y776XCC6CF
34. The Focus	F8RNFVVNVX
35. The Waste Tunnels	Y885YBB5BD
36. The Crusher	0L3!1HFTHK
37. Dead Simple	HLLTJOY!02
38. Tricks and Traps	YT!3WDDLDB
39. The Pit	HMMSKZX9Z1
40. Refueling Base	0S94VFHMFC
41. O of Destruction	HSSMBYO4YW
42. The Factory	F4MSKZZSZ1
43. The Inmost Dens	HTTLCXZ3XV
44. Suburbs	0Q76XCKPCF
45. Tenements	Y558ZKK8KH
46. The Courtyard	0R85YBJNBD
47. The Citadel	HRRNFV15VX
48. Nirvana	0DX07TMHTR
49. The Catacombs	HDDHQ!40!8
50. Barrels of Fun	0FYZ8SLGSQ
51. Bloodfalls	HFFGR93Z97
52. Abandoned Mines	0BV29RPKRT
53. Monster Condo	HBBKS8628
54. Redemption Denied	0CW1!QNJQS

SECRET LEVELS

55. The Military Base	P7WTK!GF12
56. Fortress of Mystery	1XY!PCKNTR
57. The Marshes	NMLCJSGXZ1
58. The Mansion	YCW1!QQJQS
59. Club Doom	CKFGR93Z97

NBA JAM EXTREME

It gets bigger every time! The list of secret characters in each new NBA Jam game has grown again to over 100! Seeing as it's out now, and these hidden players and cheats make the game more enjoyable, here's a complete list.

Small Players with Big Heads:
On Big Head Select, press Up, Down, Left, Right, Down, Up, then select Yes.
Big Feet Mode
Hold Left or Right when leaving Big Head Select.
Head-er-oids Bonus Game
Hold Up+Extreme on all 4 pads when leaving Team Select.
Marshmallow treats
Hold Up at end of title sequence, before screen dims.
Random Team Select
On Team Select, press Up+Turbo.
Random Player Select
After Random Team, press Up+Turbo again.
Show fake code message
Hold Start button on Power-up.
These codes must be entered by pressing all the buttons while on the Team Select screen, holding them right through to the Versus screen, then pressing the directions listed.

Shot % Display
Hold Extreme+Shoot, and release on Vs screen.
Infinite Turbo
Hold Turbo, then press Up, Down, Up, Down, and release Turbo.
No Turbo Meters
Hold Turbo+Extreme, then press Up, Down, Up, Down, and release buttons.
Remove Crowd
Hold Extreme+Pass+Up, and release on Vs screen.
These codes must be entered during the tip-off sequence, while the referee is walking out to throw the ball up.

Computer Assistance Off
Extreme, Turbo, Pass, Pass
Beach Ball Mode
Pass x2, Turbo, Extreme, Turbo, Pass x2.
Soccer Ball Mode
Pass x2, Turbo x2, Extreme x3.
Quick Hands Mode
Pass x3, Turbo x3, Extreme x3, Pass x3.
Max 3Pt Mode
Pass x8, Extreme, Pass x7.
Legal Goaltending
Extreme x8, Pass, Extreme x9.
Dead-eye Dick
Turbo x5, Pass, Extreme, Turbo x6.
Super Rainbow Shot
Turbo x5, Pass, Pass, Turbo x6.
Power Push
Turbo x2, Pass x2, Turbo X2, Pass x2, Turbo x2, Pass x2, Turbo x2.
Max Speed
Extreme x10, Pass x3.
These codes must be entered on the Keep Record screen when entering your name. As you'll see, the codes are too long to fit in as usual, so you have to enter the first 2 letters, then backspace twice, then put in the next 2 letters, then backspace again. Repeat this until the code is entered and you hear a noise to tell you it's worked, then put in whatever name you want to play with.

Start at Playoffs	PL AY OF FS
Start at Finals	FI NA LS
Start with 2 Playoff games won	CH EE SY
Start with 3 Playoff games won	NO VI CE
45 second Shootout	SH OO TO UT
Sound Test	KA ZO O

To use the secret character codes, select to enter your name, then put in the initials and dates below. Some characters don't have a code, meaning that they are only available once you've selected someone else from their team. Each team has a specially-designed kit and court – even the mad, secret teams!



NBA Jam. This time it's in 3D!



Loadsa cheats for this average game.

SCULPTURED PASSWORD (Powered-up players)

Dwain Skinner	DAS	Feb 21
Dave Ross	DJR	June 8
Jeff Peters	JBP	May 17
Daren Smith	DRS	April 10
Mike Callahan	MWC	May 1
The TinMan	TIM	Jan 24

SCULPTURED (Powered-up players)

Mark Ganus	MMG	Sept 16
Roy Wilkins	RNW	Sept 15
Rob Dautel	RAD	March 19
James Hebdon	JPH	April 26
Dean Morrell	DSM	May 9
Mike Peery	MJP	May 26

SQUID TEAM

Melissa Pardike	MAP	March 26
Jane Bradley	JLB	May 23
Jonathan Dansie	JWD	Aug 2
Lee Phung	LEE	Jan 1
Jason Greenberg	JAY	April 18
Chris Hawkes	CDH	Feb 21

ACCLAIM

Weasel	DAN	Feb 1
Magic Hair	SET	Dec 8
Samoa		
Sequioa	SDR	April 10
Air Nick		
Pistol	WAN	June 10

ACCLAIM

Mark "Chaos" Shafer	XTL	May 2
Bob "Striker" Davidson	RAD	Oct 18
Fumongous	GUN	Jan 11
Geoff "Clouseau" Higgins	GCH	April 13
Air Dog	SAM	Jan 21
Ice Princess	MDK	Dec 24

CELEBRITY TEAM

Junior Seau	JR	June 1
John Elway	WAY	Sept 30
Frank Thomas	BIG	Dec 6
Marv Albert	MRV	Dec 31
Newt Gingrich	NEW	Aug 12
Samoa	TVH	June 6

SPECIAL SPORTS TEAM

Cheryl Swoopes	SWO	Jan 1
Rebecca Lobo	LOB	July 4
Carol "Blaze" Blazejowski	BLZ	March 1
Bob Lanier	LAN	Sept 10
Air Nick	ARN	May 18
George Gervin	ICE	April 27

MISFIT

Stinger	MSS	Oct 26
Shamrock	JHG	Aug 26
Diamond Dave	DJP	June 29
Chris "Hacker" Slate	JCS	Dec 8
Todd "Cowboy" Mowatt	TVC	Oct 3
Richard "Richito" Szeto	RTS	Feb 25

ROOKIE

Jason Caffey	SCT	Nov 14
Randolph Childress		
Kevin Ganett		
Alan Henderson		
Antonio McDyess		
Shawn Respert		

ROOKIE

Lawrence Moten	REG	Jan 17
Cherokee Parks		
Bryant Reeves		
Joe Smith		
Kurt Thomas		
Ed O'Bannon		

ROOKIE

Jerry Stackhouse	BAP	Aug 11
Gary Trent		
Corliss Williamson		
Damon Stoudamire		
Rasheed Wallace		
Antonio McDyess		

ALL-STAR EAST

Vin Baker	LMH	June 28
Terrell Brandon		
Patrick Ewing		
Penny Hardaway		
Grant Hill		
Juwan Howard		

ALL-STAR EAST

Reggie Miller	EST	March 14
Alonzo Mourning		
Scottie Pippen		
Glen Rice		
Juwan Howard		
Patrick Ewing		

ALL-STAR WEST

Clyde Drexler	WST	July 12
Sean Elliot		
Shawn Kemp		
Jason Kidd		
Karl Malone		
John Stockton		

ALL-STAR WEST

Dikembe Mutombo	RMC	April 21
Hakeem Olajuwon		
Gary Payton		
Mitch Richmond		
David Robinson		
John Stockton		

HAPPY TEAM

Pirate Bill	SAL	Feb 2
Mr. Happy	MJT	March 22
Dufus the Clown	GRR	June 19
Three Feet Under	TOD	April 17
Mr. Unhappy	GEM	Nov 3
Ooohh	JLH	Jan 26

INVISIBLE TEAM

Who	WHO	Jan 1
Brained	BCS	Jan 7
Monkey Boy	PJP	Nov 2
Howie	BCE	July 10
Jim Jung	JKJ	Dec 13
Huh	CBR	June 25

TOMB RAIDER GUIDE:

This month sees the second part of our massive Tomb Raider guide which after hours, make that days of strenuous gameplay we are finally pleased to present for your viewing pleasure. It really is quite an amazing game with intricate level design and well thought out puzzles, not to mention Lara in a skimpy vest and hot pants. In fact just watching the scantily clad exploits of Lara Croft is enough to turn any red-blooded male into a hardened games player. It certainly did me anyway. So join me, LEE NUTTER as we journey off to foreign lands and uncover the wonders of Tomb Raider.

Part two of our Tomb Raider coverage begins at the Cistern. From here on in I'm afraid things get pretty damn tough, so do up your boot laces and tighten your sports bra and prepare for the adventure of a lifetime.







Follow the steps and ledges around to find the illusive rusty key.



After flooding the main room you can then reach the lever.





Climb to the ledge on the right to retrieve the first rusty key.

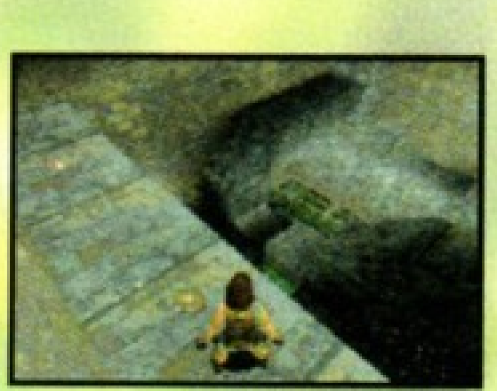


The magnums are in the hole.



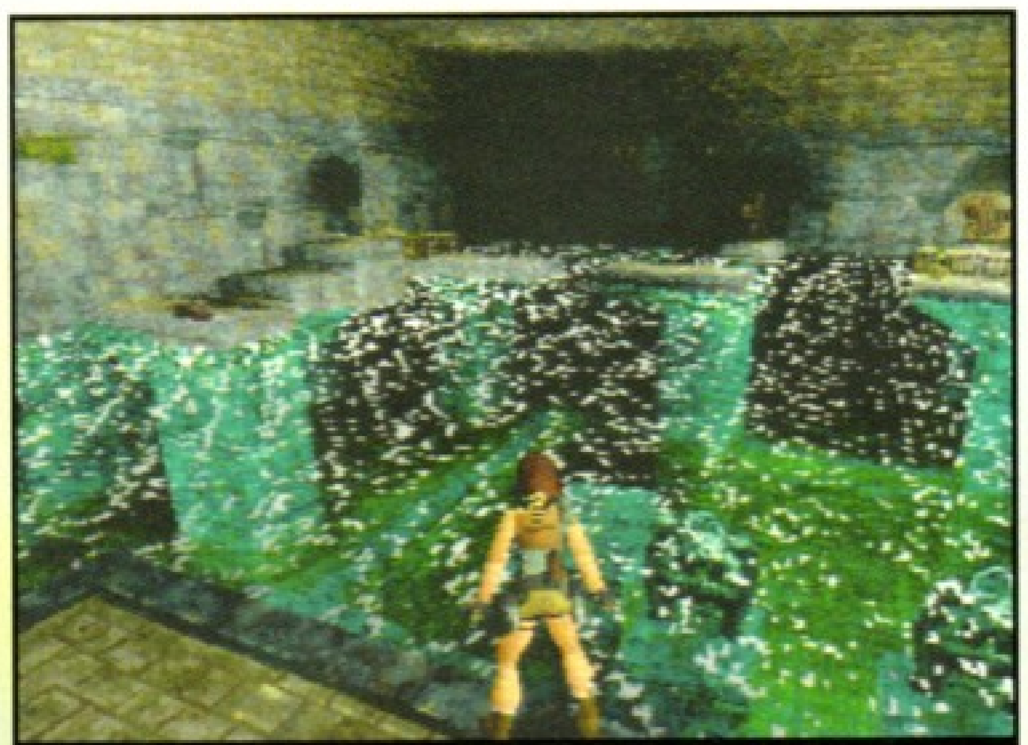
Ammo in the secret tunnel.





Jump across to the balcony to find extra ammo and medipacks.

PART 2



THE CISTERN

Lower yourself down the hole killing the rat and pushing the block through to the next room enabling you to activate the lever. Kill the rats, collect the medipack behind the door and drop down to the bridge. Jump to the platform on the right and edge along the crack collecting the shotgun ammo along the way until you can pull yourself up to the next platform. Run to the end and find the first rusty key.

Go back along the platform to the save beacon and jump to the balcony on the right. Fend off some unwelcome advances from Pierre as you follow the steps and retrieve the ammo and medipacks from the platforms. Drop through the hole in the floor and swim through to the next room and climb out. Follow the steps round to the next rusty key. Kill the rats in the next room and slide down the slope to the main room and use the save beacon. Climb up to the platform facing the two doors on the east wall (use the compass) and open the left hand one with the rusty key. Climb onto the ledge behind the door, scare off Pierre and kill the apes. Jump from one platform to the next until you reach the end where if you're feeling daring you can jump down to the hole in the wall and collect the Magnums. Those of us who do not fancy an ice-cream treat can jump over to the crevice and edge along to the room on the right, killing the alligators and using the save beacon. There is a medi pack around the corner but it is guarded by an alligator and a rat. Quite why the alligator doesn't eat the rat is beyond me.

Using the ledges and the crevice on the wall negotiate your way to the door at the top and enter it being careful of the spikes. Drop down into the pit and follow the tunnel to the next room where you can activate the lever at the top which you can reach by going from ledge to ledge. This opens the door at the bottom where you'll find the silver key. Return to the main room via the pool in the middle.

Proceed to the balcony room where you first became acquainted with Pierre and pull the lever flooding the main room. Find the north facing tunnel in the main room and swim through to the next room and activate the previously inaccessible lever near the surface. Climb out and collect the ammo and medi pack before diving down to the newly opened gate and collecting the second silver key. Pick up the key and another gate opens which takes you back to the main room.

Swim to the right hand door on the east wall and open using the second rusty key. Swim through to collect a medi pack and the gold key. Return to the main room and climb up to the balcony on the north facing wall using the silver key to access the door. Use the ledges to reach the platform above the door and disperse with the ape then use the gold key to access the door. Stay on the platforms to kill the lions before going through the door being careful of the darker tiles, some of which collapse. Remove the block at the end of the room next to the lever and throw yourself down the pit.

SECRETS

1. Jump to the balcony from the first save beacon and inside the room you will find on the various ledges and platforms a medipack and some ammo.
2. In the water in the main tunnel there are two doors with a narrow tunnel beside. Swim through it to find some magnum clips.
3. The magnums are in an alcove on the far wall of the room you opened with the first rusty key. Jump down to it from the last ledge and perform standing jumps forward, right, right, right, back and right to reach the secret room.





TOMB OF TIHOCAN

Swim down the tunnel past the first room and round the corner to the lever. Once activated swim back to the room where you can now climb out and activate another lever to open a door. Kill the alligator and use the platforms to reach the lever at the top which floods the room. Collect the medipack at the bottom and climb onto the floating block and make your exit. Swim down towards the grate and pull the lever reversing the current. Follow the tunnel to the next room, kill the rat and use the ledges to reach the save beacon before taking the door on the left being careful of the axe which you have triggered. Follow the tunnel and grab on to the ledge and edge across until you can pull yourself up and activate the lever. Go back to the axe room and take the other door, scare off Pierre and proceed through the metal gate and swim to the next room. Kill a rat then swim to the next room and kill the lion. Climb onto the block, kill the gorillas then follow the corridor at the end of the room and activate the lever. Climb up to where the gorillas were and jump across the spikes to the crack at the left of the door. Pull yourself up, go into the room and retrieve the medipack and gold key.

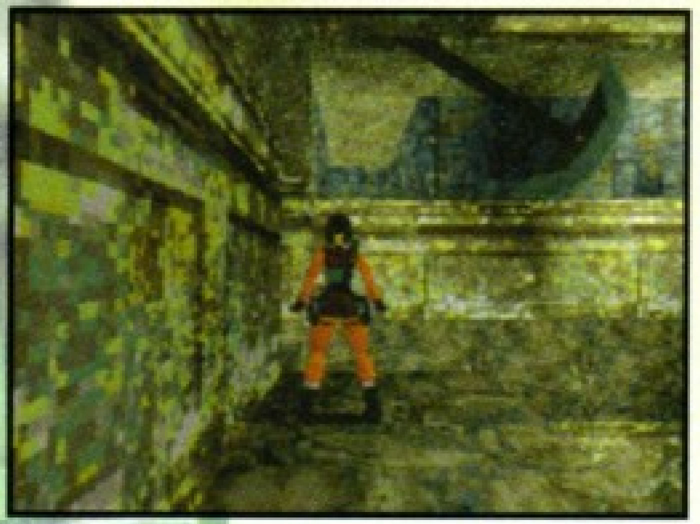
Go back to where the lion was and go through the opening in the centre of the room, open the door with the gold key and use the blocks to cross the room, retrieve the medipack and use the save beacon. In the next room pull the block onto the tile closest to it, kill the two gorillas and collect the items. Pull it to the west tile, go through into the alcove until the boulders have gone and retrieve the medipack and collect the key. Pull the block to the next tile, kill the rats and get the medipack. Push the block east onto the last tile and kill the gorilla and collect the ammo.

Climb onto the block and go through the metal gate, collect the medipack and the key and exit the way you came in.

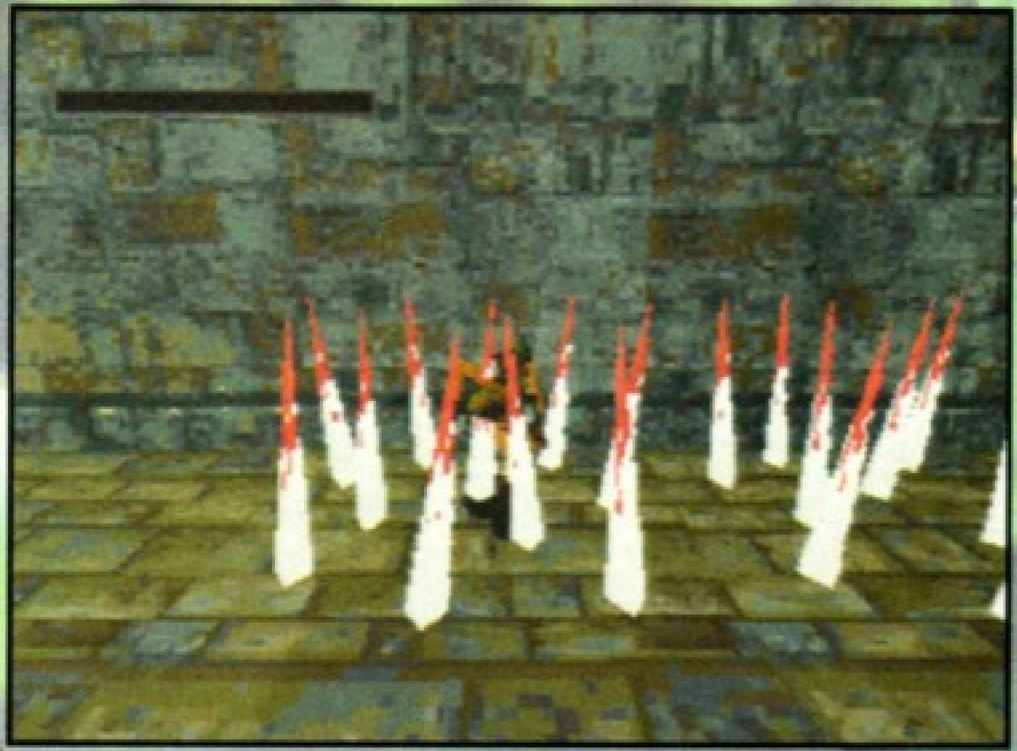
With both keys open the last door then save your game at the save beacon, slide into the water and go to the tile at the other side, climb out and follow the path east to the next room. Use the sloping rock to cross the water, activate the lever, slide into the water and go down the northern tunnel. From here you can see the Tomb, follow the tunnel underneath and activate the lever to the door then saving your game. Return back to the Tomb and and kill the statue with the shotgun, the save beacon will then appear. Go into the tomb and kill Pierre at last and loot his body for the Scion, a key and his magnums. Climb onto the ledge and follow it to the ammo before using the gold key in the lock. Make your way to the far end of the room and make your exit.



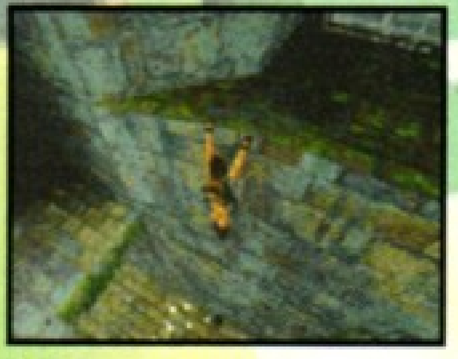
Another confrontation with that French git Pierre. No matter how many bullets you shoot into him he just doesn't die. Be patient though, his days are numbered.

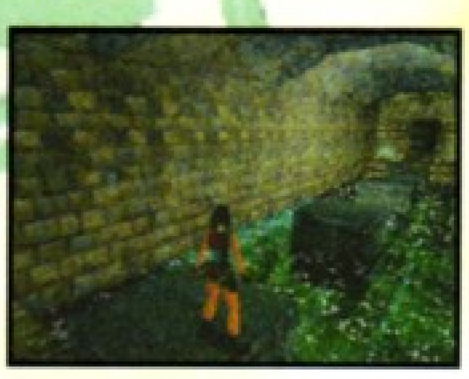




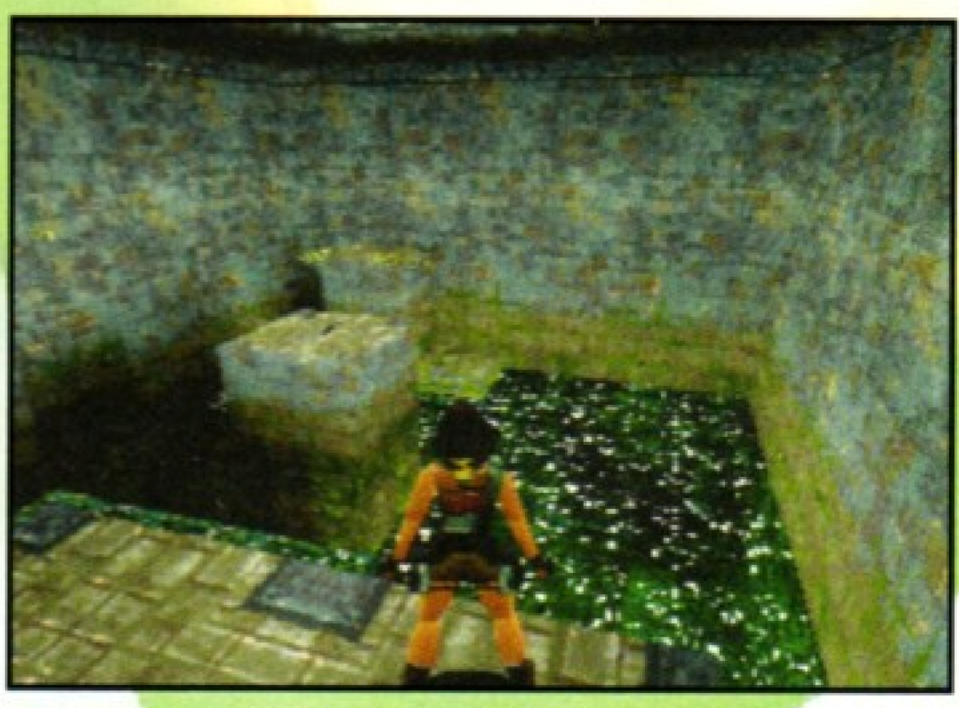








(Left) Jump to the crack to the left of the door to avoid being impaled. (Right) Jump alomg the blocks to the save.



After flooding this room you should jump back into the water and to the newly accessible room and retrieve the medipack.

SECRETS

1. Go down the steps past the swinging axe and into the room, step on all three tiles to unveil a secret room.

2. From the third save beacon jump onto the right side of the slope and hold the jump button to get to the hidden room avoiding the collapsing floors. Go to the edge so that Laras right side is facing the room

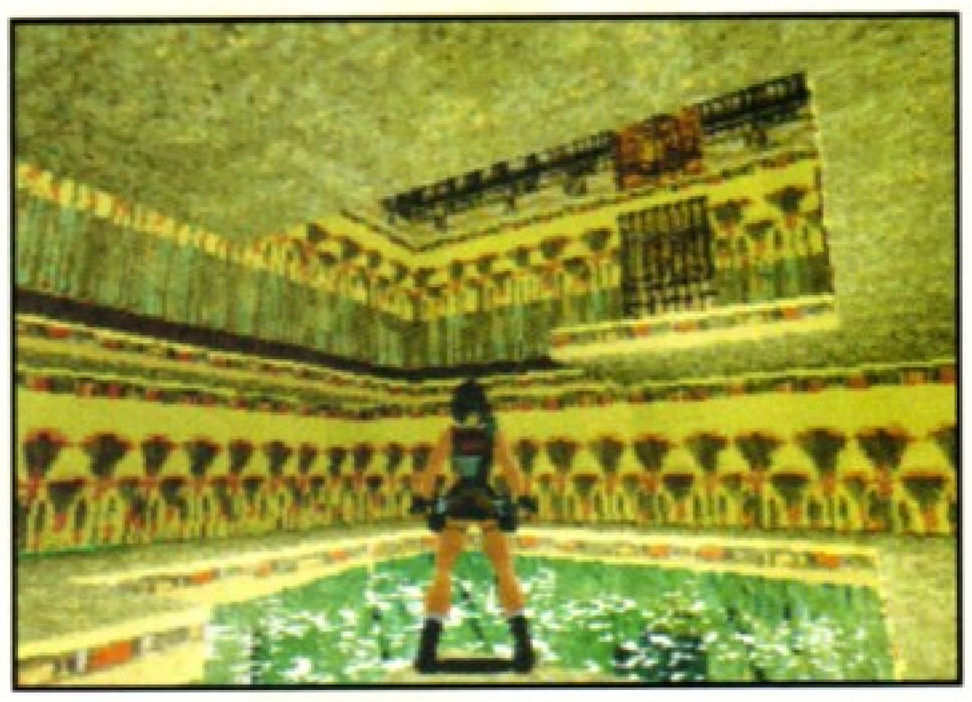


CITY OF KHAMOON

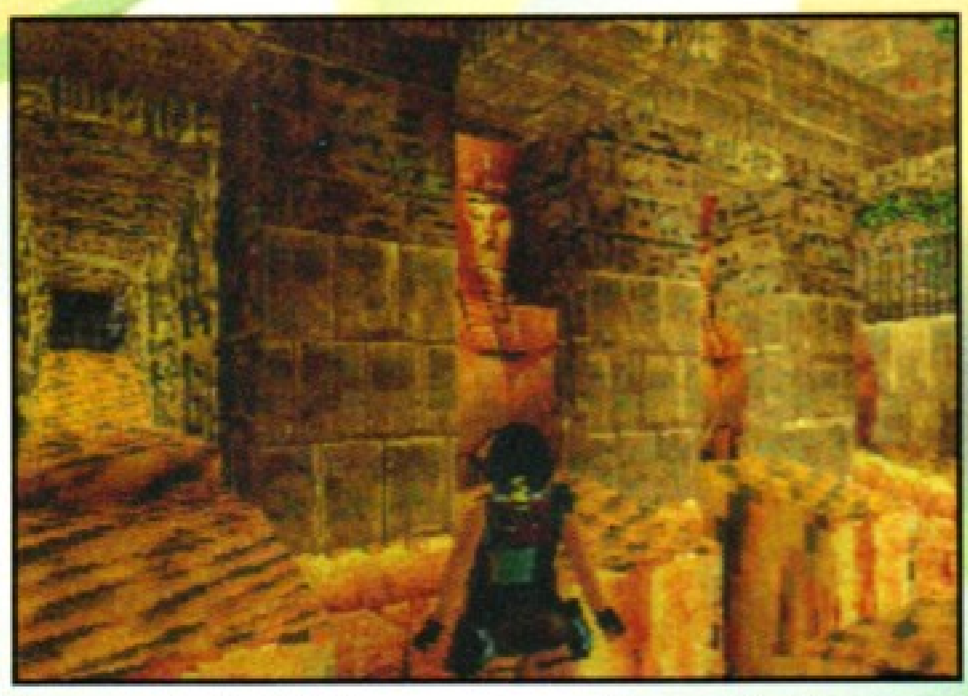
Lower yourself down and edge along the crevice to the lever, go through the door and pull the block three times and collect the ammo and medipack. Pull the block on the north ledge over the other, then jump onto the pillar and up to the south wall killing the panther. On the archway entrance is a medipack and ammo. Climb onto the ledge overlooking the Sphinx head and dispose of the mummy. Climb onto the ledge near the palm trees, jump over to the pillar and collect the ammo. Climb around to the left side of the Sphinx head and round to the back collecting the Saphire key and some ammo then saving your game. Pull the block under the Sphinx head and climb over it to open the door with the gold key. Go down the tunnel and onto the ledge, collecting the medipack and killing the panther before saving your game. Make your way to the room at the end, killing another panther and dropping to the room on the left killing the alligator. Walk cautiously up the ramp triggering the boulder, jump aside and into the water in the corner. Activate the lever at the end of the tunnel, swim through the door and onto the ledge. Go to the ledge near the gate, push the block twice and climb to the save point. Jump to the ledge below the door, follow the steps to the tunnel and activate the lever. Return to the save point and pull the block away and then pull it once along the edge of the water. Jump over the block, push it twice, climb up to the ledge and shoot the mummy, enter the room and trigger the switch. Jump down and move the block to reach the golden ledge. Go into the hole above and activate the switch in the next room. Run toward the gong, jump onto the far ledge and retrieve the ammo from the right hand ledge. Slide down and pick up the medipack, go to the Sphinx and over to the green ledge on the left. Go through the door, get the ammo and jump to the save point. Dispose of the panthers, retrieve the ammo and enter the lit hallways and collect the medipack. Climb along the ledge at the back of the room to the bridge, follow the path and shoot the mummy in the room. Run up the hill to the next room and get the Sapphire key on top of the pillar. Proceed up the hill, then along the ledges, activate the lever and return to the entrance. Drop down onto the the slope and make your exit using the Sapphire key.



Upon entering the Sphinx room it is a good idea to dispense with the mummy first from your vantage point. Then proceed down and retrieve Saphire key from behind the Sphinx head before removing the block from between its paws and going into the room.



A bit of water based puzzle solving has Lara stumped as she stands by the pool side and ponders exactly what to do.



The room to the left has an angry panther waiting for you.



Shoot the alligator then quip "You're luggage!" Arnie-style.



This level is very sandy based and features lots of tricky puzzles not to mention loads of those pesky mummies.



Although Lara may look as though she is levetating off the ground she is in fact in one of the underwater sections.

SECRETS

1. At the boulder turn right and go towards the dark hole and climb the ledge to find a hidden room.

2. At the green ledge near the sphinx, turn right and proceed up the slope to the highest ledge to find a secret area.

3. Near the fourth save point run to the middle of the bridge keeping to the left and perform a running jump to the secret alcove in the corner.

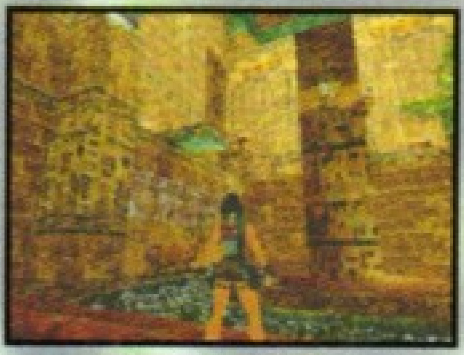


THE OBELISK OF KAHMOON

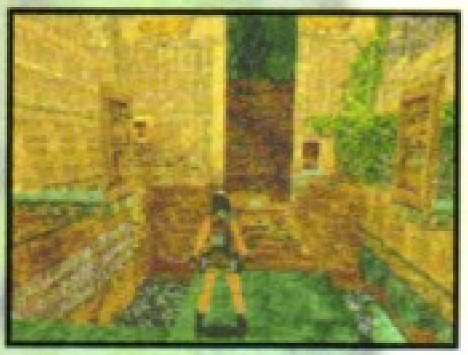
In the hallway jump up the hill and enter the room with four pillars and go to the far block and pull it three times. Push it under the gold door, go in the tunnel and kill the panther. Retrieve the medipack and return to the pillar room. Push the far left block once and get in the water. Swim to the second room, collect the ammo, medipack and Saphire key and return to the pillar room. Enter the door in the corner with the Saphire key and climb to the golden door to the save beacon.



Proceed up the stairs, kill the mummy and go to the left corner of the room to activate the lever. Take the Eye of Horus, drop to the bridge, pick up the ammo and jump into the water and get the magnum clips. Swim to the surface and enter the hallway, jump up and across the stone ledges to the save beacon. Get to the highest ledge, run up the stairs, go to the plants on the ground and pull the lever. Walk to the left ledge, drop down and pick up the magnum clips and medipack. Go back to the top of the staircase through the hole then into the alcove. Kill the panther, activate the switch and go through the door collecting more ammo. Go to the main room and up the steps, jump to the ledge on the left and collect more ammo before continuing up to the save point.









The game is getting pretty tough by now as you can probably tell by the sweat stains beginning to appear on Lara's vest.



This requires precision jumping so you don't fall to your death.

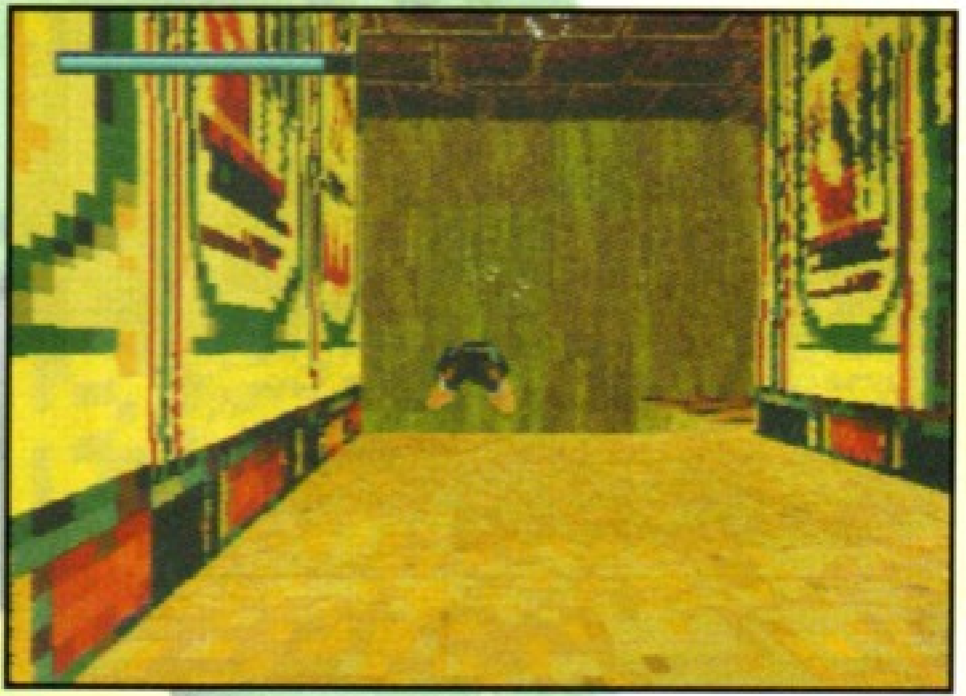
Jump to the fenced ledge and collect the Ankh at the end of the path. Go back to the ledge, collect the medipack and activate the lever. Go back out and through the door, up the steps and edge along the crevice on the right and drop down to the ridge, walk round and drop down. Go back up the steps and shoot the mummy and activate the switch to lower the bridge. Collect the medipack and go round the corner and pull the lever. Proceed down the stairs past the pillars and jump down to the gong. Jump to the ledge on the right and enter the doorway next to the green ridge. Go up the stairs and edge along to the right of the wall and into the large chamber. Use the ledges to get to the save beacon towards the bottom.



(Above) Find the lever before trying to pass through the door or you'll just bang your head. (Below) More cruelty to animals.



Proceed down the hallway and activate the lever and return to the mummy room. Drop down and run past the stairs to the ledge and climb up until Lara is stood on the green platform. Cross the bridge and take the Scarab then jump to the adjacent bridge to discover the Annubus Seal. Get into the water into the newly opened tunnel collecting the ammo and medipack. Jump to the staircase and drop through the door to return to the Sphinx. Then use the four items to make your exit through the last door.





Use the gold key in the gold lock to open the gold door.

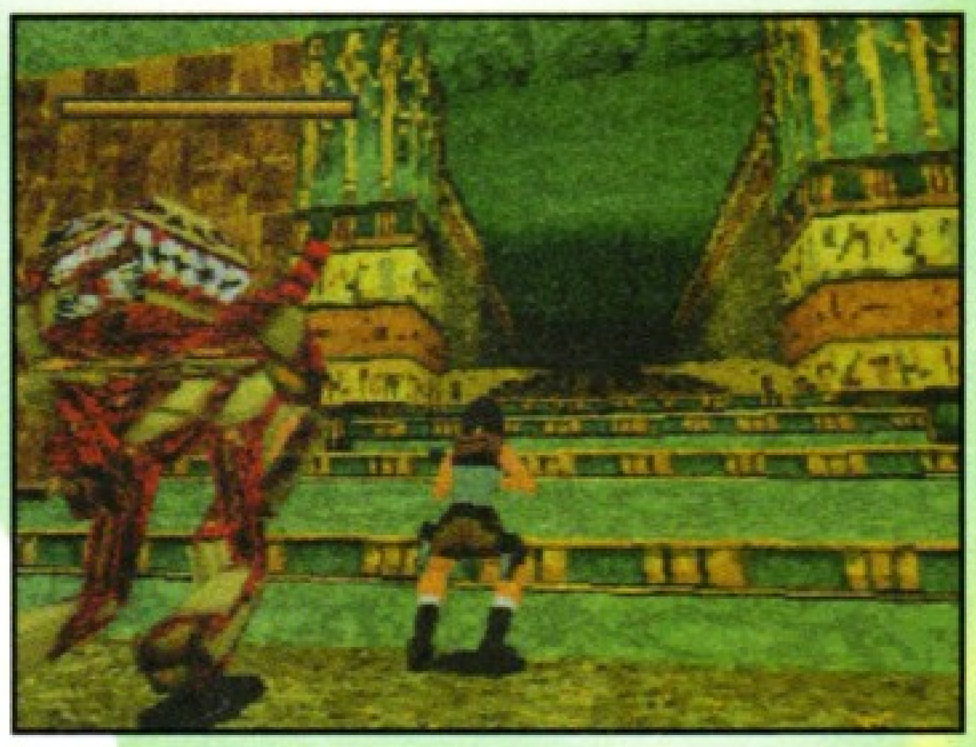
SECRETS

1. Find the medipack and ammo in the pillars room by running to the end of the ledge and jumping over to the secret stone.
2. After the third bridge has been lowered walk past the pillars and look for the white gong on the end of the ledge. Perform a running jump to the secret gong and find a medipack and ammo.
3. From the top of the pillar above the white gong, jump to the gong and to the ledge below. Go through the doorway at the green ridge, climb the steps and edge along to the right of the ledge and pull yourself up to the ledge above. Jump over to the ledge with a column and go into the tunnel to find a medipack and some ammo.

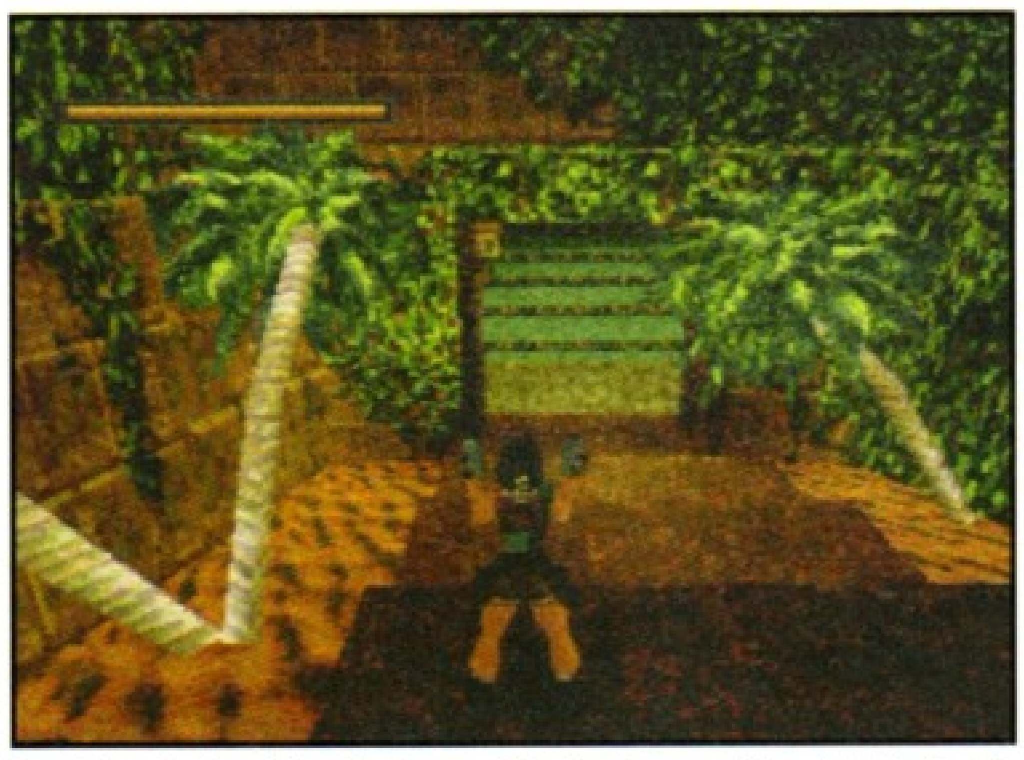


THE SANCTUARY OF THE SCION

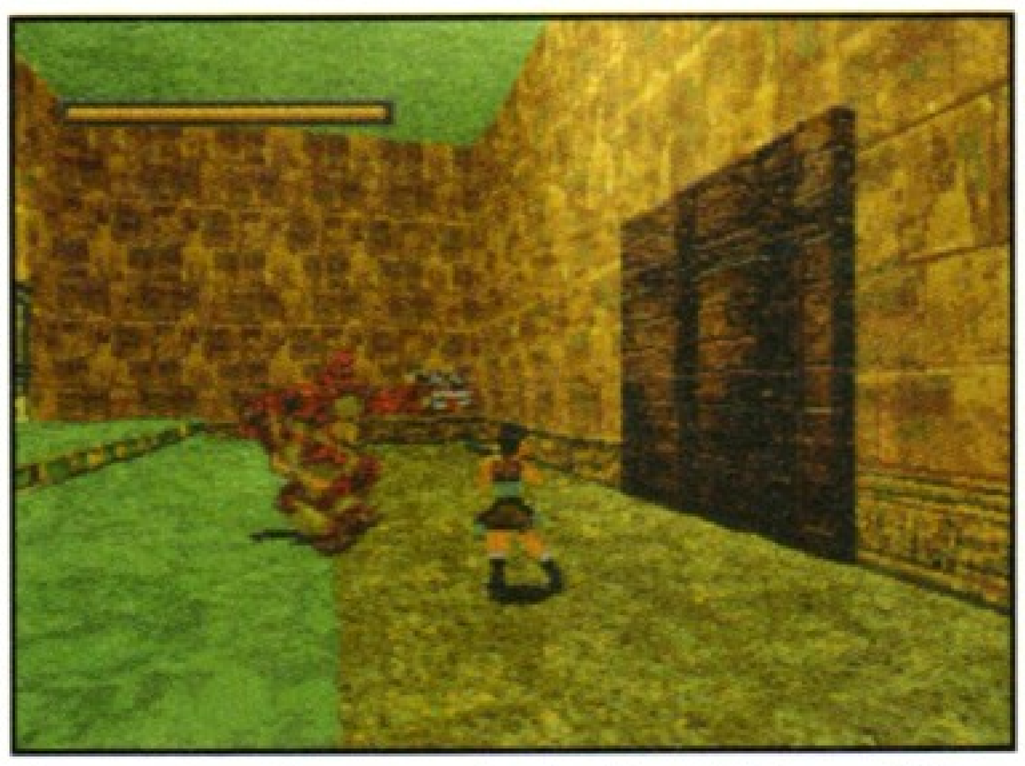
Grab the Magnum Clips, run up the steps and kill the mummies then collect the ammo. Climb onto the block in the middle of the room and jump to the chamber above. Run forward and turn right, slide down the slope and shoot the mummy. Climb onto the block next to the bright pillar, turn left and climb up the pillar. Jump backwards landing on the highest pillar, then turn around so the wall is to the left of Lara. Jump forward onto the next pillar, move forward and grab the crevice in the wall. Edge to the right and drop down, turn right and climb up the three steps. Jump across the pillars to find a ledge, grab the ammo then walk to the end of the ledge. Jump forward three times and activate the switch below before killing the Sphinx. Stand to the left of the switch and jump across to the small ledge, get the ammo and turn left. Jump to the next ledge and take the shells. Walk to the edge and jump up to the ledge above. Drop backwards and grab onto the edge, then drop to the ledge below. Turn around and jump to the sandy ledge, drop backwards and grab onto the edge. Drop down over the slope and grab on to the end, now you can fall on the ground to safety. Run between the Sphinx's arms and grab the ammo, go around the Sphinx and climb on to the sloped block to the right then jump across to the opposite block. Jump up and pull yourself up to the ledge. Run forward and jump onto the pillar, turn left and leap across to the higher pillar. Climb up to the ledge and use the save beacon. Run past the slicer and grab the medipack, continue along the path and jump across to the switch. Kill the the flying monster, then return to the pillar below the curved platform and climb on top of it. Turn so that Lara's facing the corner of the room and jump over the next pillar onto the slope below and slide down to the Sphinx. Run along the left side of the Sphinx and enter the passage, collect more ammo and



By now you should have obtained plenty of ammo enabling you to gun down this mummified creature.



Don't be decieved by the tranquil palm tree setting of this level.



These creatures damage your heath a lot so kill them quickly.

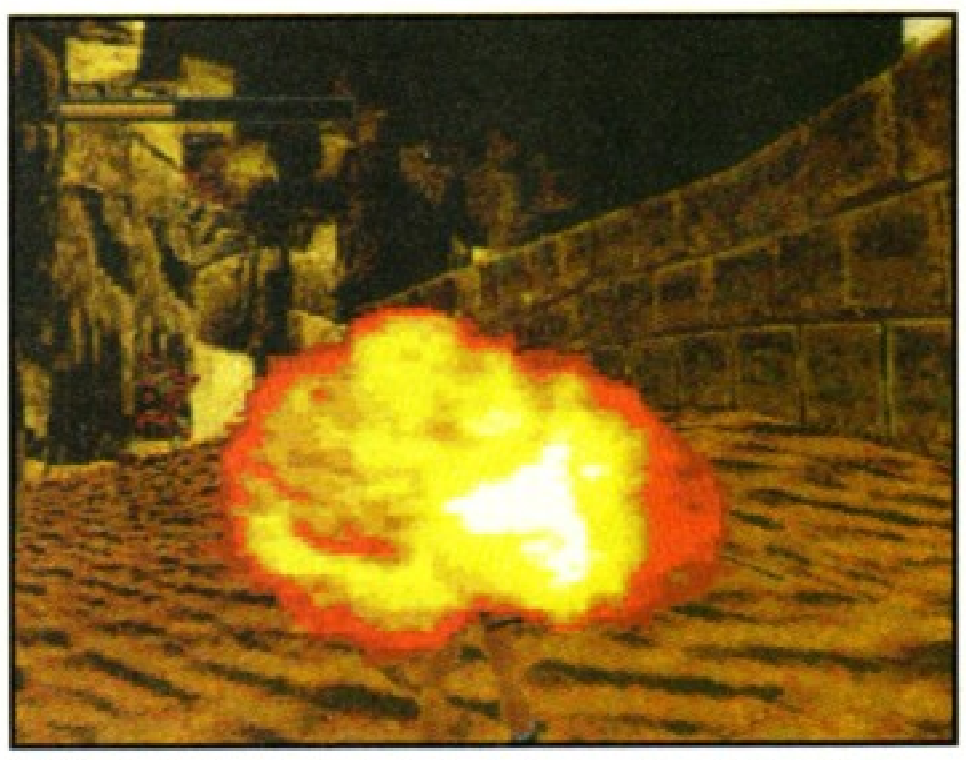
enter the hallway to the left.

Go over to the slope, turn around and hop backwards to slide down, grab the ledge at the end of the slope and edge left. Drop onto the ledge and collect the ammo. Face the wall and climb up the ledges to the top, slide down and drop into the water. Swim to the bottom and collect the gold key, swim towards the stairs in the corner and climb up out. Turn left and return to the top of the stairs, slide down the slope facing forwards and jump when Lara reaches the end. Grab the bridge and pull yourself up, turn right and use the gold key to open the door. Kill the centaur and grab the medipack at the first Ankh on the altar and use the save beacon.

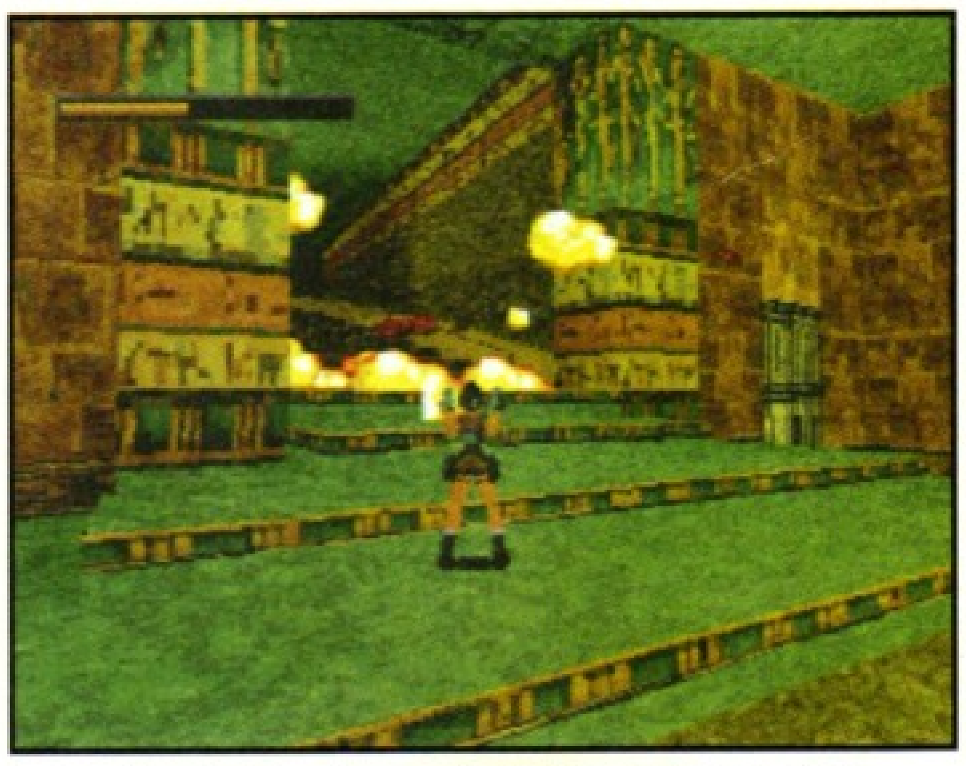
Jump off the bridge into the water, go back to the stairs and climb all the way down. Leap into the water and climb up the stairs in the corner, follow the hallway back outside and return to the small ledge next to the bright pillar. Turn left, climb the pillar and jump backwards to land on the highest column. Jump up to the thin ledge, walk forward and collect the magnum clips below. Leap forward and continue along the sandy ledge. When a wall is reached turn a little to the left and leap over to the ledge. Go to the end of the ridge, jump up to the ledge above, turn left climb up and jump across to the rocky ledge. Follow the path and climb all the way up to find the save beacon.

Run into the hallway, turn right and push the block forward, then run around to the other side. Climb up the block to the ledge above, kill the centaur, then collect the medipack and a second Ankh . Run back outside, turn right and slide down the slope. Turn left and jump on the Sphinx's back, shoot the mummy then climb up to the top of the head. Use the first of your Ankhs then climb down to the front and use the second Ankh, now save your position.

From the fourth save beacon, climb back to the top Ankh symbol and turn left. Walk across the side of the head until you can go no further. Look down



This babe is hot to trot. In fact she's on fire. Take a look.



Rather than just lay down and die they explode instead.

and find the ammo that appears to float in mid-air, jump over to it onto an invisible platform. Walk to the edge and leap across to the cliff ledge, turn around and shoot the two flying demons, then drop to the ground. Enter the door between the Sphinx arms and jump into the water . Grab the ammo under the water, then swim down the right foot of the statue. Enter the tunnel and pull the switch, then surface and climb out. Climb onto the lower pillar, jump across to the second column, turn right and jump to the lowest step. Run up the staircase and slide down into a cave and save your position.

From the fifth save beacon shoot the flying monster then face the stone head on the left and drop down to the ledge. Turn around, leap across to the ledge by the side of the head, drop down to the ledge below then face left and slide down to the bottom, turn and dive into the water. Climb out of the water onto the front of the statue to the right and pull the lever. Dive into the water and swim into the tunnel between the statues feet. Climb out of the water at the end, run up the long curving path and take the ammo. Continue on and grab the Scarab, walk into the entrance room and shoot the two mummies and the centaur. Use the Scarab on the lock in the corner to open the gate. Take the medipack and ammo, run down the ramp and climb up through the hole to enter the Scion room and kill that pesky Larson.

SECRETS

1. Climb back to the top Ankh symbol from the fourth save beacon then turn to the left and walk forward across the side of the head. Jump over to the floating ammo where you'll find an invisible platform enabling you to retrieve the Uzi.

EXHUMED TIPS

Lobotomy's Exhumed is a hugely underrated first-person perspective shooter that combines traditional corridor blasting action with an adventure based non-linear level structure. It's also loaded with secrets. In fact, the first time you complete the game, your real quest has just begun. Listed here are some tactics, along with the location of all 23 dolls. Remember, don't start looking for the dolls until you have all the artifacts. So, who do we have to thank for these tips? Try DANIEL JEVONS, who originally wrote this very feature for the American mag, MegaFan.

TOMB OF RAMSES

1. JOHN SCHWAB

Blow a hole in the wall as you are riding down the first elevator you come to (facing north) to open a hidden passage. Look for a slightly out of place brick.

2. KEVIN CHUNG

Look for a chamber with 4 pillars. Blow open the top of the northwest pillar (look for a different texture), and bomb-boost up to the doll.

1.2


2.1


1.1


1.3


2.2


WEAPON #1
MACHETE

Your starter weapon that never runs out. Its ineffective against all but the weakest foes, and should only be used either a) underwater or b) when you've just picked up a purple super-weapon power-up.
BEST VS: PIRANHA



WEAPON #2
PISTOL

The first weapon you find gives an excellent shot to weapon energy ratio, and is good for dealing with one hit enemies like spiders and birds. Unfortunately its pretty in-effective against more than one enemy at a time.
BEST VS: SPIDER, BIRD



WEAPON #3
M-60

The M-60 should be your staple weapon. It clears a room of lesser enemies in seconds and can pin Anubis Guards, Mummies and even Lion Bitches. Ammo consumption is a problem though.
BEST VS: SPIDER, BIRD, MUTANT WASP, ANUBIS GUARD



WEAPON #4
ANUN BOMB

On top of its secret finding properties, the Anun Bomb is a powerful long range weapon, provided you can master the art of angled throws. It can also be used underwater, which adds to this weapon's usefulness.
BEST VS: PIRANHA, LAVA BEAST



KARNAK

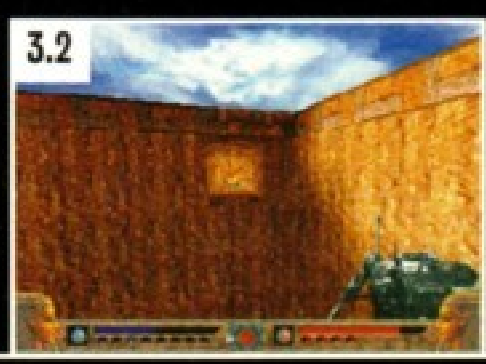
3. EZRA DRIESBACH

In the obelisk courtyard jump from the water-pool area (at the top) onto the arched entrance away to the area (there are a couple of pots there). This opens a secret door to open just around the corner. Levitate in and get the doll.

4. MARK COATES

Throw a bomb at the rockface ABOVE the waterfall near the exit to Amun Mines to open a secret area. Once in the area use another bomb to open a vertical passage in the right hand wall.

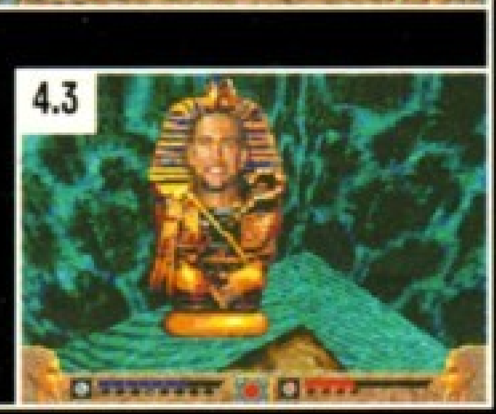

3.1


3.2


3.4


4.1


4.2


4.3

KARNAK SANCTUARY

5. PAUL LANGE

In the swamp trench, on the bridge where there is a full ammo and full health you will see a slight indent in the overhang. Blow open a hole in the wall on the OPPOSITE SIDE of the indent (ie. behind it) to reveal the doll.


5.1


5.2

SOBEK PASS

6. PAT SCHREIBER

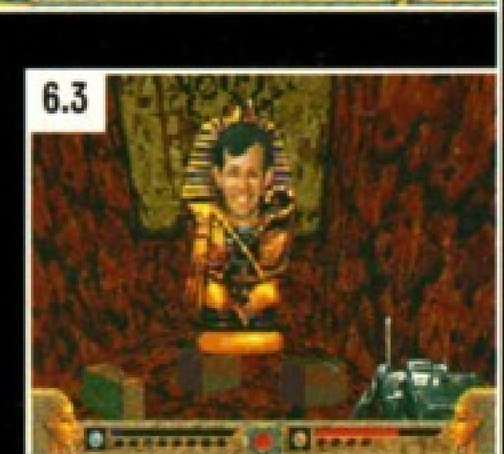
Blow open a hole in the pilar you must jump on to get the key. The hole is on the southern face, about half way down.

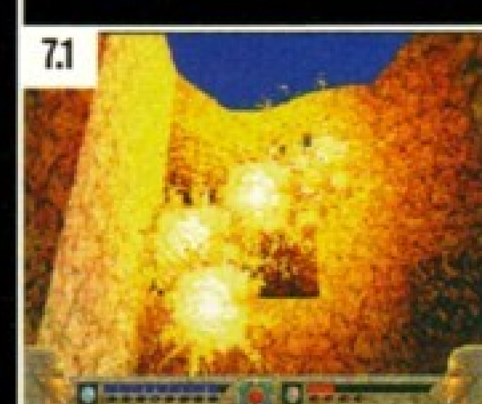
7. TOM KRISTENSEN

Near the start of the level there is a small brown ledge high on a cliff face. Stand on this ledge and point north. Levitate over to the wall you are facing and blow open a secret chamber near the top of the wall.
If that sounds a bit tough to follow, just look at the picture sequences below and you should easily get the picture.


6.1


6.2


6.3


7.1


7.2

WEAPON #5
FLAME THROWER

The ultimate close range weapon. The flame thrower stops any enemy in its tracks and keeps them pinned till death. Good against bosses. Consumes energy though.
BEST VS: MUMMY, LION BITCH, KILMAAT GUARD



WEAPON #6
COBRA STAFF

Exhumed's rocket launcher! Except this one homes in! Unfortunately, the cobras aren't very damaging, it often misses and can hurt you at close range. Still it can be used underwater, so it does have its uses.
BEST VS: SPIDER, PIRHANA



WEAPON #7
RING OF RA

A brilliant short range weapon, simply beacuse of its rapid rate of fire and wide spread coverage. Best saved for encounters when you find yourself outnumbered.
BEST VS: MUTANT WASP, LION BITCH, LAVA BEAST, KILMAAT GUARD



WEAPON #8
MANACLE

Exhumed's BFG! Keep the button held down to charge a more powerful shot, then let her rip. The manacle fires up to four streams of electric death, which home in.
BEST VS: MUTANT FLY, LION BITCH, LAVA BEAST, KILMAAT GUARD



SOBEK MOUNTAIN SHRINE

8. JEFF BLAZIER

In the outside lava trench with the four floating platforms, levitate underneath the western most platform (facing the indent in the wall) and throw a bomb directly down to blow open a secret passageway.

8.1


8.2

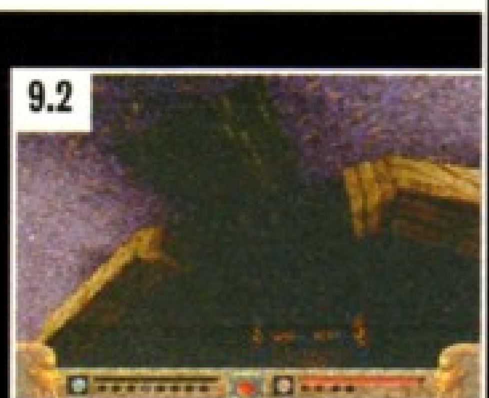

8.3

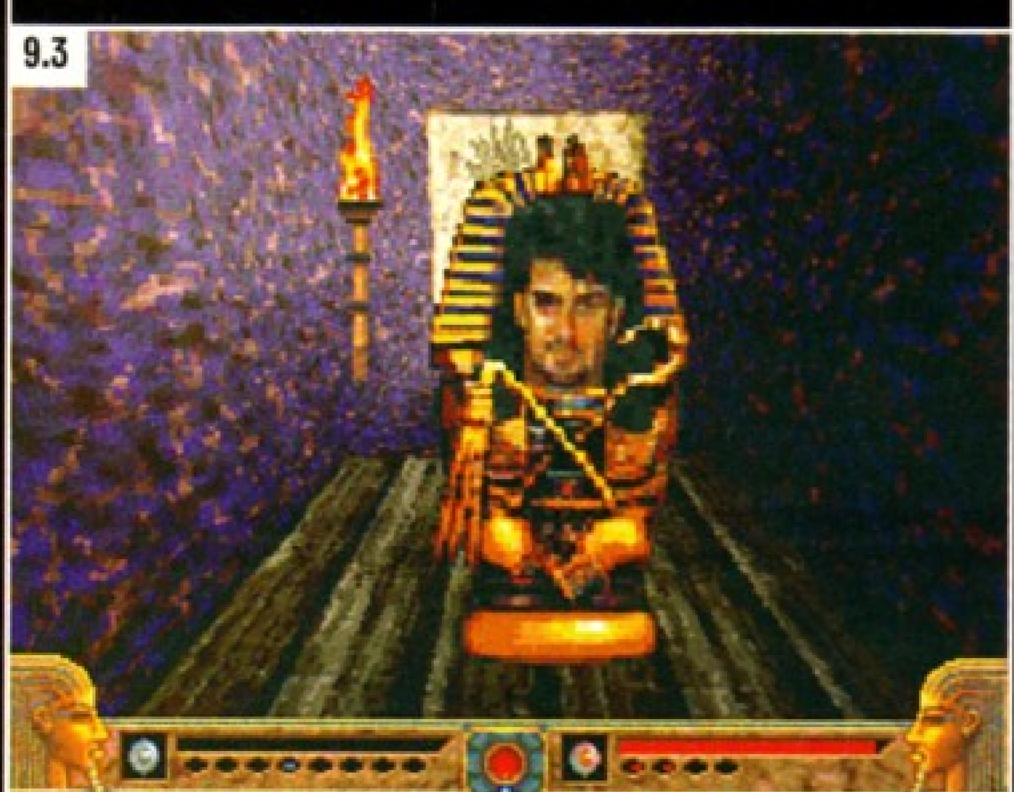

AMUN MINES

9. SCOTT BRANSTON

In the room where you pick up the Anun Bomb, there is a garish blue texture on the ceiling. Throw a bomb at it and bomb-boost up.

9.1


9.2


9.3


SET PALACE

10. WILLIAM VALLIERES

Stand below the bridge over the lava river. Blow a hole in underside of the bridge, levitate out over the lava and bomb boost up. Simple?!?

10.1


10.2


10.3



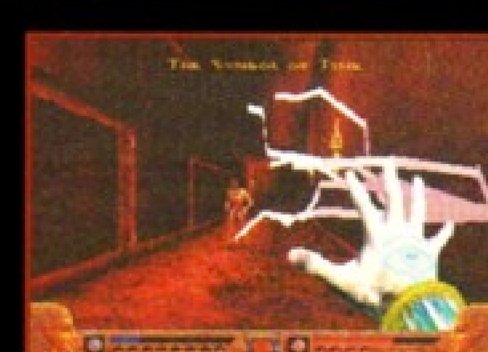



Bomb lobbing is an essential technique, both for destroying meanies and for adding to your leviational powers.









Look at these pictures. It really is hard to believe that the Saturn is producing these visuals. But it is! And best of all, the programmers Lobotomy are converting Duke Nukem 3D to Saturn! Rejoice! There is a God!

ESSENTIAL TECHNIQUES

These are techniques that will aid you in your quest. Learning these little tactics is absolutely essential in completing the actual game before the quest for the Team Dolls can begin.

LOOKING

Proper use of the "LOOK" button is absolutely crucial to Exhumed. You should get used to using it for throwing Anun bombs, checking your footing for jumps, checking your height when negotiating a laser beam field, and last but not least, climbing vertical walls.

SWIMMING

The Sunken Palace is one of the toughest levels in the game, but there is a way to make it easier. When swimming, instead of just holding down the jump button, try tapping it rythmically to swim faster. Also, any damage you take underwater comes off your air-o-meter as well as your health. Likewise, any health you pick up gives you slightly more air.

BOMB-BOOST

By throwing a fully charged Anun bomb directly at your feet, you will take damage, but also be propelled higher than a standard jump. If you jump up and levitate first (using Horus' Feather) you can go even higher. You have to do this to complete Kilmaat Colony.

CLIMBING

Using the same principle as the Bomb-Boost, when levitating in the air move to the nearest wall and push into it. Angle your view diagonally downwards towards the wall, and use either the Cobra Staff or a charged Anun Bomb to propel yourself up the wall. Keep pushing into the walls as you fire and you can scale a vertical wall. A cunning technique, for sure.

SET ARENA

11. ERIC KLOKSTAD

Throw a bomb against either of the two large pillars in the lava pit which have a full health/ammo power-up on the them. There is a doll at the bottom. Now you're about half-way through the doll collection procedure.


11.1


11.2


11.3

NILE GORGE

13. RICHARD NICHOLS

Jump over the level-exit camel (that takes you to the Thoth Treasure Reliquary) and bomb the wall. Grab the doll from the upside-down room. Are Lobotomy trying to say something about Mr. Nichols?


13.1


13.2

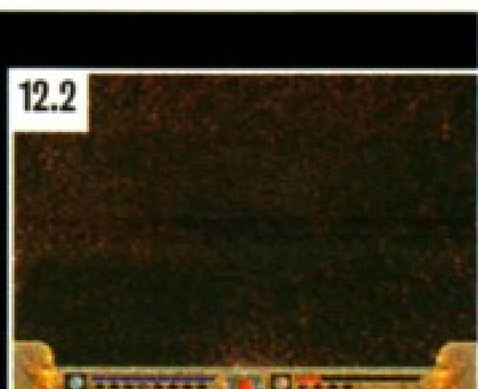

13.3

CAVERN OF PERIL

12. PAUL SCHREIBER

Just past the chasm where there are four wasps and a wall shooter that blows open a doorway on the opposite side of the chasm, there is a chamber with a bluish texture on the ceiling in one corner. Blow it open, and the doll should be yours.


12.1


12.2


12.3


12.4


12.5

THOTH TREASURE RELIQUARY

14. DAVID LAWSON + 15. JOE KRESOJA

Throw a bomb on the pedestal where you collect the protective anklets and drop down inside to collect the David Lawson doll. Now turn around and bomb the opposite wall (with the decorative murial). Bomb again to reveal another secret area and another doll.


14.1


14.2


14.3


14.4


15.1


15.2


15.3

HEKET MARSH

16. PAUL HAUGERUD

In one of the donut shaped areas (with a fenced grating at the top of the outside wall) simply bomb-boost up to the top of the pillar to collect another doll.


16.1


16.2


16.3

SELKIS PATH

17. KURT PFEIFER

As you approach the end of the level and reach the last green platform before the camel area, bomb-boost up to the top of the chamber to locate a secret passage with a doll at the end.


17.1



17.2


17.3


17.4

SELKIS BURROW

18. TROY JACOBSEN

Walk to the exit at the bottom of the spiral staircase where you start. Now turn around and bomb the wall directly behind you, to the right of the grey wall. Hit the switch to lower the highest stair, and blow out the revealed wall. Hit the next switch to lower another stair, blow out that wall and follow the passage.


18.1


18.2


18.3


18.4

MAGMA FIELDS

19. DOMINICK MEISSNER

In the large room with the spiral bridge and a full health there is a stalagmite. Bomb the base of the bridge on a certain side of the salagmite to reveal a passage. Hit the switch and drop down to collect the doll.

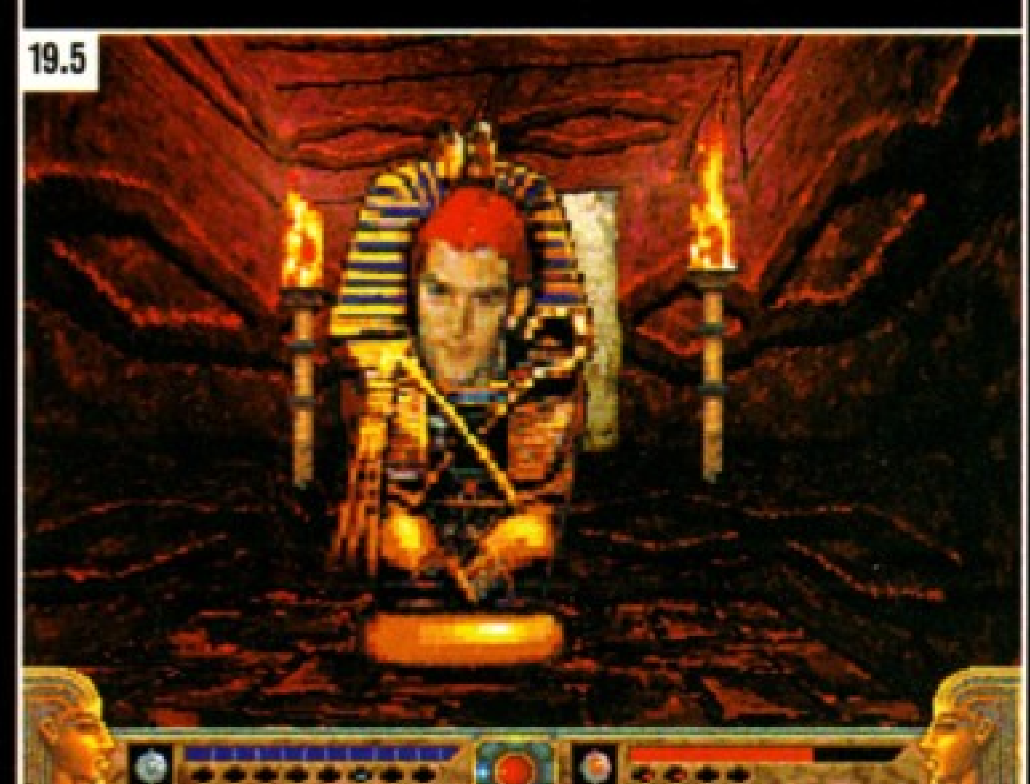
Don't fumble the ball now - you've almost got all of the dolls and soon the rewards shall be yours. Yours! Yes! Ahahahahahaha!


19.1


19.2


19.3


19.4


19.5





HORUS PEAK

20. PAUL KNUTZEN

After running accross the series of dropping platforms you end up on the first of two floating platforms, pointing towards a lavafall. Blow an opening in the side of the laval fall near the top, and levitate in the bag the doll.


20.1


20.2


20.3

CANYONS OF CHAOS

21. JOHN DUESSEN + 22. JOHN YUILL

At the start of the stage jump and levitate staight ahead. Follow the path round till you reach an overhang. Squeeze under it and as you come out, turn around and bomb the patchy texture. Enter the passage and follow it till you reach a dead end. Bomb the ceiling to reveal another passage and climb up. Negotiate the laser maze (a bitch!) and two dolls are yours.


21.1


21.2


21.3


22.1

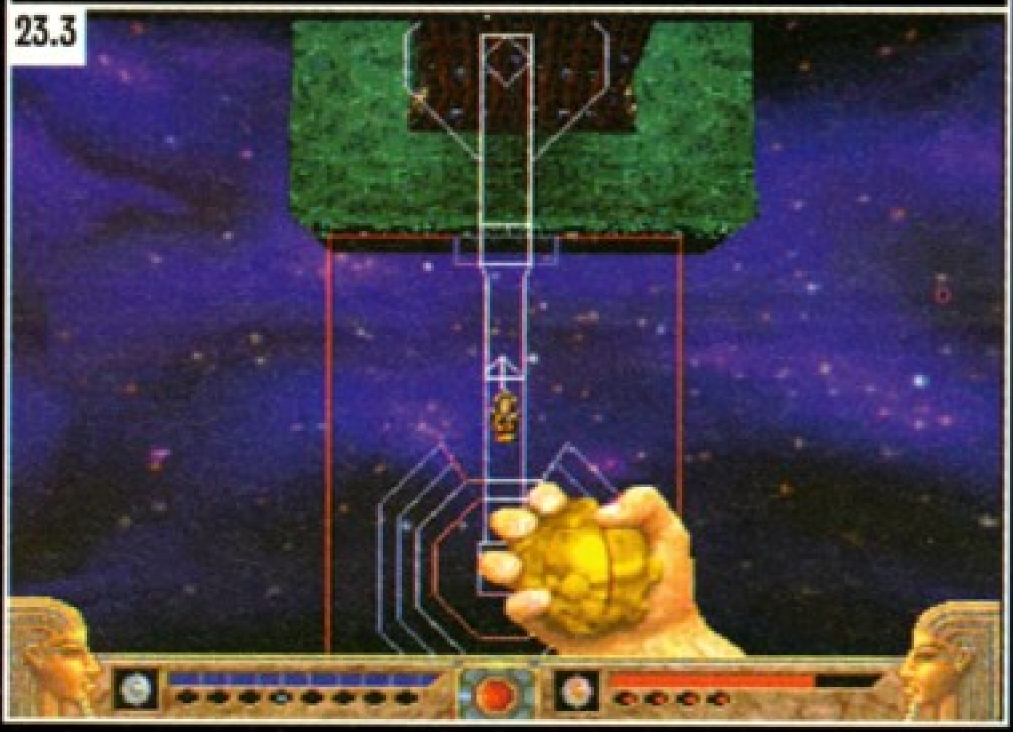
KILMAAT BOSS STAGE

23. BRIAN McNEELY

There is an invisible walkway directly beneath the walkway leading to King Ramses body in the the mumy incubation chamber. Drop down onto the walkway (tricky), collect the Brian doll then head towards the rings. Use your map to see where the invisible walkway ends and jump onto the lowest ring. Now bomb boost up two ring levels and jump onto the mummy. Takes practice!!!


23.1


23.2


23.3


23.4


23.5


23.6


23.7

YOUR PRIZE

Complete the game with all 23 dolls and start a new game over your old save game slot (don't worry, it's safe). You'll now play in LOBO-FLIGHT MODE. You fly everywhere, can breathe underwater and all your guns operate at super speed. Now retun to the main title screen for a new option - Death Tank mode! Readers of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE will remember Lobotomy talking about this in the interview conducted in issue #14. Yes, they actually included it in the finished Exhumed game! A note of warning though from Dan Jevons, who compiled this game: it's confirmed that Death Tank is in the American version of Exhumed and is *probably* in the UK version, but we can't be 100% sure. But it should be.

COIN-OPERATED

AM2's latest driving game is soon to hit British arcades, having been a major hit at the recent trade-only ATEI coin-op exhibition in London. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE checked out this awesome-looking game.

SCUD RACE

Despite rumours and speculation about the power of rival companies' arcade technology, it appears obvious that Sega remain in a league of their own with their latest coin-op board - Model 3. Namco and Konami have threatened to steal Sega's thunder with their own technology and yet nothing has appeared (Namco in particular disappointing with Tekken 3 - nowhere in the same league as Model 3, despite the rumours).

AM2 continue to set the pace with Scud Race - the second of their Model 3 arcade games after the board's stunning debut in the unforgettable Virtua Fighter 3. If the name is unfamiliar, you should be aware that the game's project title was SuperCar - a game we revealed in the Introducing... section of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE a couple of issues ago. Well, the name may have changed, but the rest of the facts remain solid. Scud Race is the semi-official sequel to the epoch-making Daytona USA, only it's bigger and better in just about every conceivable way.

The question has to be: what next from AM2 using this spectacular technology? Well, the smart money would have to be on Virtua Cop 3. Just imagine what AM2 could achieve with this technology with the shooting game genre!

In Coin-Operated, we usually reserve space for games that are bound to appear on the Sega Saturn at some point in the future. Obviously with a game as advanced as Scud Race, we can't be sure seeing as the Model 3 hardware is so monumentally more powerful than the trusty old Saturn. However, since Virtua Fighter 3 is seemingly bound to appear on the Saturn using a 3D accelerator of some description, the smart money would be on a Scud Race conversion appearing mid-way in 1998. Still, this is just conjecture from over-excited members of the SSM team! We've still got Sega Touring Car Championship to look forward to on the Saturn before we hear any talk of Scud Race appearing for the home machine. Still... everyone should have a dream eh readers?

FOUR COURSES

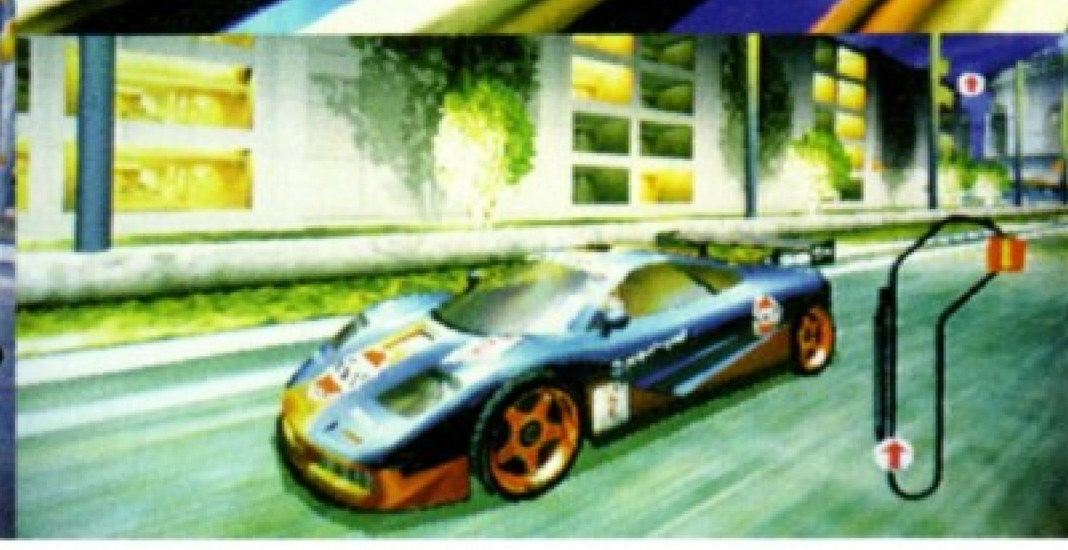
Daytona USA only had three different courses... well that number has been upped in Scud Race with four different tracks now on offer. In Daytona those tracks were easily remembered as being of easy, medium or hard difficulty. Things are a bit more complicated in Scud Race... but not that much. Instead of having just the one easy course, instead there are two shorter courses to choose from.

Dolphin Tunnel is the name of the first beginner course and this is set in daylight. The second track, Twilight Airport, is also set at an easy difficulty level, but is set at night to make things just a tad more difficult (and show off more of the Model 3's awesome graphical capabilities). From there we move onto the familiar realms of the medium and tough difficulty levels. The intermediate difficulty track is known as Mystery Ruins (no prizes for guessing what you'll find in some of the background scenery here) and the expert track is the bizarrely monickered Classic Castle. Again, in keeping with what has been established in Daytona USA, the more difficult the track, the longer it is, and conversely, the amount of laps you need to complete is lower.









The graphical effects of the Model 3 board allow for some of the most spectacular background scenery ever seen in a video game ever. And the real cars, like the Dodge Viper, are ace too!

All of the cars looks amazing, with stunning reflective metalwork. Answer us honestly: does the McLaren F1 look that much better in real life? Well?








START
SEGA
SEGA
Lease Plan
Lease Plan
Lease Plan
Lease Plan
Gulf
MICHELIN
MICHELIN
IGOL
27
Cica
Cica









AWESOME DETAILS

Take a look at the screenshots to witness the sheer detail on these tracks. If you thought Daytona had a lot to appreciate, you'll really get a kick out of what Model 3 has enabled AM2 to achieve. The effects are frankly stunning. Look out for the little bits of detail that really give each course character. On one of the tracks, there is even an enormous fish tank, with small individual fish moving around inside!

With the rendering power of Model 3 at AM2's disposal, even the cars themselves look stunning. Zoom in close to the texture-mapping and you get no pixelisation whatsoever... and just look at how the lights reflect off the bodywork of each of the SuperCars. Not only that, but you can see the fully detailed drivers inside each of the cars, complete with some decent animation depending on what happening to the car. It's a revelation, mate!

REALISM IS THE KEY

Once again, AM2 have triumphed in merging reality with excellent gameplay. Scud Race features a control mode which is excellent fun to use and features awesome feedback effects in the chair and the steering wheel. However, since the AM2 guys have concentrated on real cars, they have made sure that a great amount of realism is inherent in the game. During the test phase, key members of the team raced the four cars you get to control in Scud Race in real life! Such painstaking research is probably the key behind the success of previous AM2 racers such as Virtua Racing and Daytona USA.

Put simply, the graphical excesses that Model 3 provides, combined with the attention to detail that AM2 are famous for has created what must be one of the most exciting, playable racing games ever! Truly this game does play as well as it looks. Which is no mean feat.

VR VIEWS

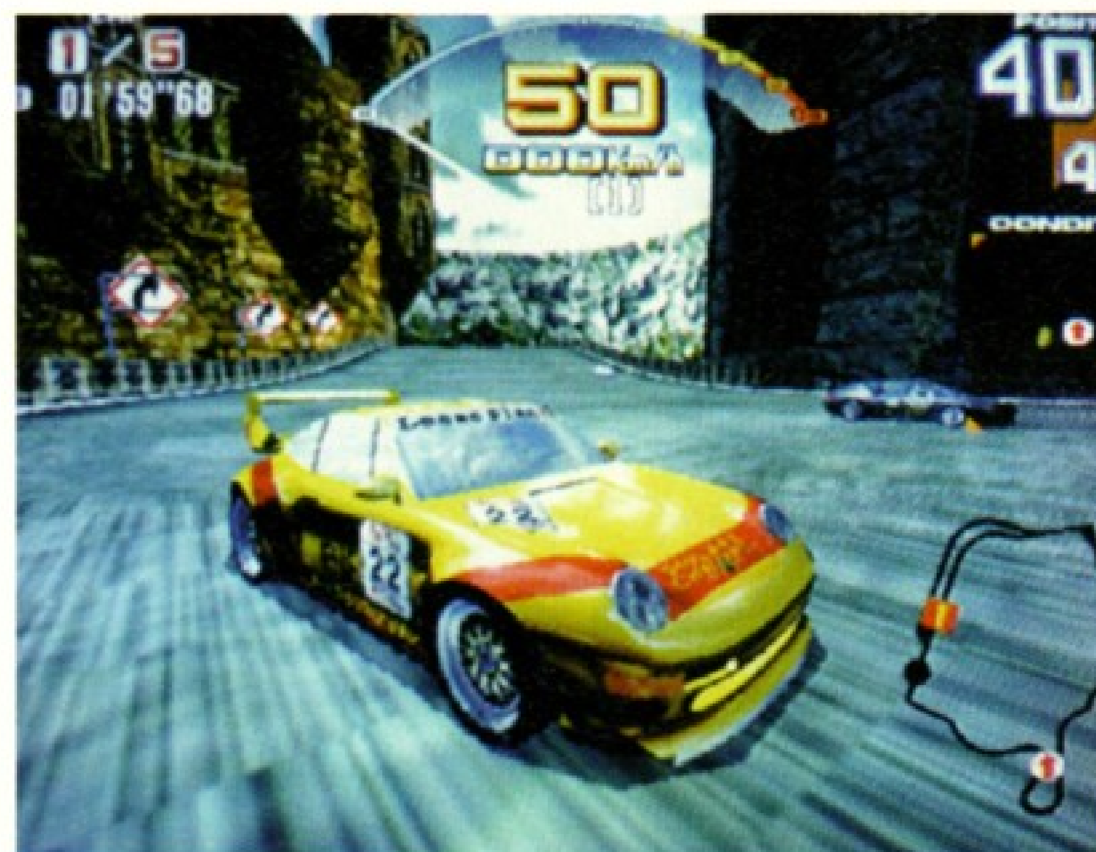
All of AM2's driving games since Virtua Racing have featured the ability to choose your viewpoint. Scud Race continues this fine tradition and this facility works in pretty much the same way as Daytona USA. The first two perspectives are inside-car views. Like Daytona, they consist of either a bumper's eye view (so to speak) or an internal dashboard/ steering wheel view. What is pretty cool about the latter is that you can choose a centred up perspective like Daytona, or instead shift to the left behind the wheel, which is how the view would be in real life!

In addition to this in-car action, you also get to choose from two out-of-vehicle perspectives. Like Daytona this centres around a close-in view of your car or instead a swept-back chase helicopter style view situated behind and above your motor.

WHEN'S IT OUT?

Scud Race has already had a limited release in Japan and is currently on test in one location in the US, where it became the fastest-grossing arcade machine of all-time. After the preview at the ATEI Show, we can expect a similar test to occur in the UK before the full-on release (which will probably be around March time).

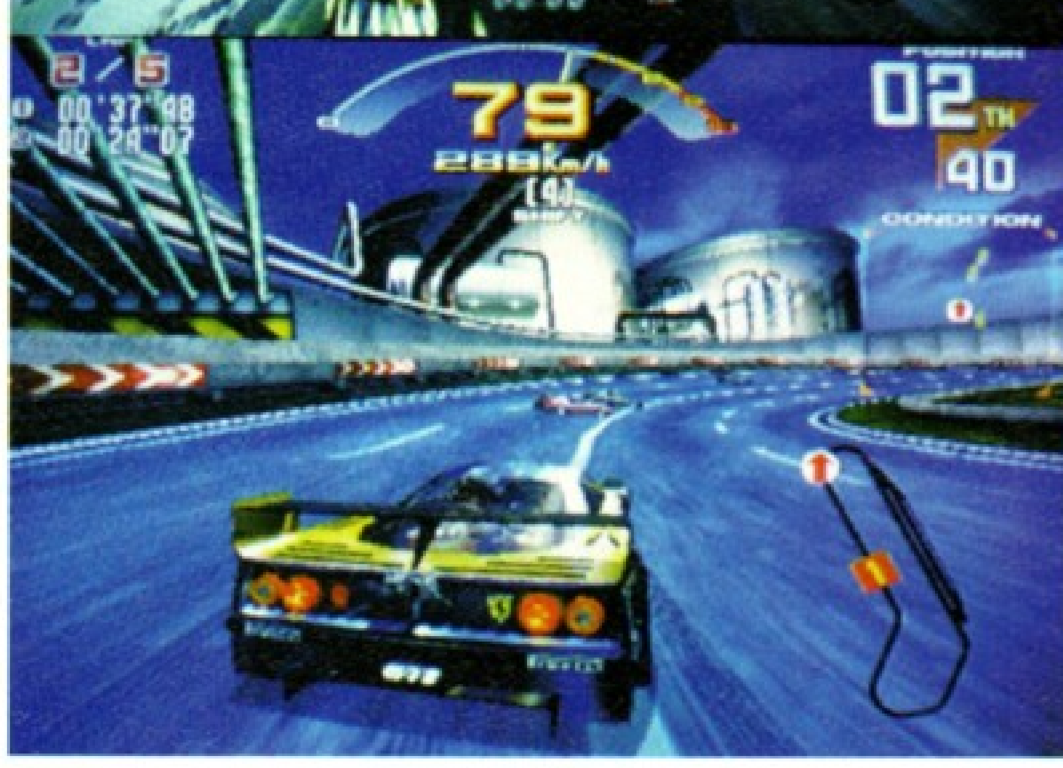
Look out for Scud Race to appear first in the major London arcades such as SegaWorld and the Trocadero. It will be interesting to see how much the arcades will charge for such a monumentally impressive game...















Some of the world's fastest production motor vehicles are included for use in the new AM2 driving game Scud Race. AM2 have done their customary research into the subject matter, driving the Ferrari F40, McLaren F1, Porsche 911 and Dodge Viper at special race tracks. They did this in order to make sure that Scud Race captures the raw power of these awesome machines. As you would expect from a road racer from the labs of the masters, Scud Race does not disappoint. AM2 have harnessed the power of their new board and combined it with everything learned from developing classics like Daytona USA.









Scud RAce has recently gone on test in key locations in the United States and Japan (and expect it to show up at SegaWorld in the not-so-distant future). At the US site, it became the fastest-grossing arcade game EVER. Either the game's incredible, or the arcade were charging a fortune to play it. Probably both, actually. Regardless, you know that when a new AM2 driving game comes out, it will be business – and with Model 3 power, it's just a revelation!



THE SUPERCARS

SUPERCAR #1: FERRARI F40

When it was first unveiled in 1992, the Ferrari F40 was the fastest street-legal motorcar in the world, being capable of speeds in excess of 200 miles per hour. In fact, the highest speed recorded by this incredible piece of engineering is 201mph. The other really notable thing about the F40 is that only 40 of them were ever made, being as it is, a celebration of 40 years of Ferrari engineering. That being the case, they are extremely valuable. This car has recently been superseded by the new Ferrari F50, which looks very similar indeed. Although it probably goes even faster.

SUPERCAR #2: DODGE VIPER

Visit California and you'll find that this immensely impressive SuperCar is also immensely popular (Vipers are almost everywhere in Los Angeles). Capable of speeds around the 165 miles per hour mark, this production car is one fearsome piece of kit, looking bloody amazing. The Dodge Viper is also a fairly cheap example of the SuperCar, being available for between $40,000 and $65,000 depending on the model - a far cry from the $250,000 a Ferrari F40 would have set you back. Were there any left to buy there is.

SUPERCAR #3: McLAREN F1

Snatching the title away from Ferrari as the fastest production car in existence, as you might imagine the McLaren F1 is the culmination of the company's formula one technology, crammed inside the sleek lines of a street-legal SuperCar. Capable of speeds in excess of 210 miles per hour (provided you have a very long road indeed), this is currently the car of choice for the sports car community. It looks totally sensational and the Scud Race coin-op is probably the closest you'll ever get to driving one.

SUPERCAR #4: PORSCHE 911

One of the oldest bona fide SuperCars in existence, the Porsche 911 hasn't really changed that much in shape since its debut in the early seventies. However, Porsche have been constantly refining its performance and it is as renowned for its smart acceleration and handling as it is for its impressive top speed. Probably about as controllable as the Dodge Viper and a lot easier to get to grips with than the F1 and the F40 (just not as fast, that's all).

OUT NOW

BUG TOO!
BY SEGA £44.99 85%

After being first revealed at the E3 convention last year in Los Angeles, the average Saturn gamer on the streets finally gets to sample the latest installment in Bug! excitement from the much fancied Sega Away Team. Any one expecting any great departure from the first Bug! is in for a disappointment as the sequel follows much the same route. It's just got a whole lot bigger and more enjoyable. The lack of variety levelled at the first game has been sorted out and the range of tasks for Bug! and his pals to wade through is



pretty impressive.

However, the first game really suffered because it became very frustrating to play. Enemies would leap on-screen at phenomenal velocities, making the game more a test of memory than of skill. And that's the main problem with the sequel too, a fact which is bound to put the same people off this game as it did for the first Bug!

Saturn platformers are pretty few and far between, but the genre has come on leaps and bounds (excuse the pun) and we should have expected a bit more from Bug Too!

DOOM
BY GT £44.99 56%

One of the most awaited of Saturn games has swiftly become one of the most reviled in the scant weeks that it has been on sale. id software revolutionised gaming with their amazing



corridor blast 'em up and just about every conversion (even the 32X one) has managed to retain the brilliant gameplay of the PC original.

Unfortunately, UK coders Rage Software are behind this effrontery. Doom relies on a smooth 3D update to maintain its game balance and playability... which have been shot completely out of the window with the most jerky 3D display ever seen in a Saturn game of this genre.

Excuses like "the Saturn isn't up to it" are clearly rubbish after Alien Trilogy, and especially Exhumed, which is 30% smoother than PlayStation Doom with far superior lighting effects. What is clear is that Rage and GT have let Saturn gamers down badly with a horrible, incompetent rendition of a gaming classic which should be avoided at all costs.

SONIC 3D BLAST
BY SEGA £44.99 82%

After the demise of Sonic X-Treme, Sega desperately needed a Sonic game for the Saturn. Enter Sonic 3D Blast, a game which is basically an enhanced version of the excellent Megadrive title Sonic 3D: Flicky's Island. In a break from Sonic tradition, S3DB is set in an isometric gameplay arena. Sonic's task is to collect the usual rings along with Flickies (little birds) which he leads to safety. Highlight of the game is the full 3D Special Stage - an enhanced version of Sonic 2's brilliant sub-game. It's no surprise that this is the best bit as it is the only aspect of the title coded by Sega of Japan's Sonic Team.

And maybe that's the problem. S3DB was brilliant on the Megadrive, but when it comes to Sega Saturn you can't help but want a game that stretches the machine to the limits of its capabilities - just as the original Sonic games did for the 16-bit Sega system. You just can't get away from the fact that although very playable, you should be getting a whole lot more from a Sonic title.



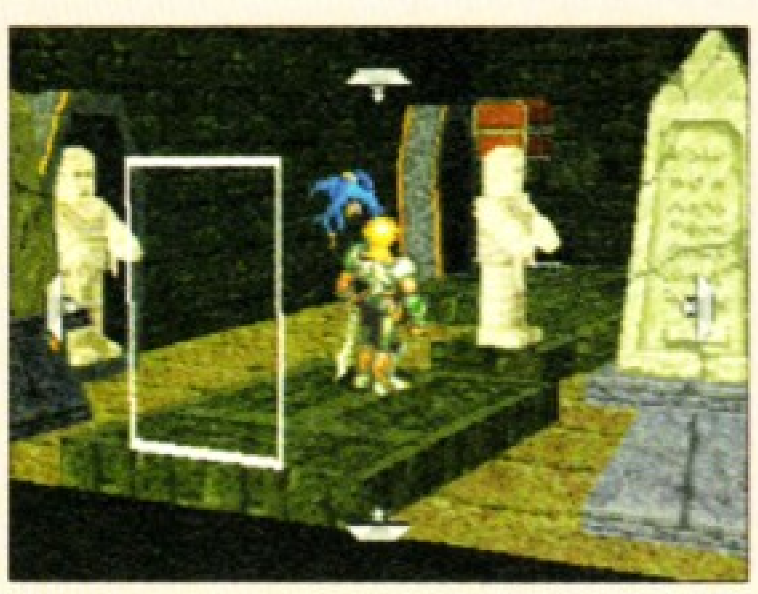
The bottom line is that Sonic 3D Blast is an enjoyable enough game, but "enjoyable enough" isn't quite the same as "epoch-making" - a phrase synonymous with true Sonic Team produce.

DARK SAVIOR
BY SEGA £44.99 92%

GAME OF THE MONTH — SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

From our research (and indeed the sheer number of phone calls we get here at SSM Central), it's obvious that a great many Saturn owners get a lot of enjoyment out of role-playing games. Climax's Dark Savior is probably the best adventure game available on any 32-bit system and it's out now, hence the special Game of the Month status for this excellent title.

Imagine LandStalker on the Megadrive. Give this game a true 3D engine with scenery displayed using texture-mapped polygons and you have some idea of the basic system Dark Savior employs. Add in a brilliant combat system combined with an amusing and detailed plot line and you have an essential adventure game. Dark Savior succeeds on a multitude of levels. The adventure itself is deep and compelling and the user interface is easy to understand and get the most out of - there's even useful compatibility with the NiGHTS pad. Also of note is the Parallels system. Depending on how you handle the first scenario of the game you're teleported to one of five different quests, and these in themselves change according to your performance, making for a vast amount of lastability in this brilliant game. Game of the Month for sure, this is just great!



QUARTERBACK CLUB 97
BY ACCLAIM £44.99 65%

Acclaim have updated their American Football simulation game just in time for Christmas... which unfortunately is exactly the same time that Electronic Arts have chosen for the Saturn rendition of John Madden Football...

This new Quarterback Club isn't really a bad game. It's just that in every aspect (bar the recreations of famous games), it's totally outquaffed by the EA effort. Quarterback Club's graphics in particular stand out as being poor, with a jerky display, horrible PAL borders and some hugely ugly pixelisation when the camera zooms in on the players. Which is quite a lot.

The visuals could be forgiven if the game was good, and although it's not an affront, it's hardly the instinctual exercise that Madden's is. In fact, an enormous great chart is provided to tell you what buttons do what action in what circumstances. Hmmmm. Not good.

This country isn't exactly decked out with American Football fanatics and unlike Madden, this is unlikely to convert you.



NBA JAM EXTREME
BY ACCLAIM £44.99 70%

Acclaim are no doubt encouraging you to "Slam in the Jam" with this new 3D edition of the much vaunted NBA Jam series - hardly a recommended activity if this "Extreme" version is the best Acclaim can do.

In terms of what this offers over the previous versions, the answer has to be simply "more". In addition to the common-or-garden Turbo button, there's also an "Extreme" button which helps open up over 30 new techniques added into this version of the game. Making the whole shebang look a bit



more nineties is the 3D viewpoint, which allows for some nice camera angle trickery which obviously betters the simple left-right scrolling of the last version.

However, this new 3D business comes at a price. Whereas the old game was very smooth indeed, Extreme isn't. It's quite jerky in fact, and this does detract somewhat from the playability. It also looks a bit rough, to be honest, the sprite-based players looking a bit ropey overlaid over low resolution texture maps. NBA Jam Extreme is likely to find favour with Jam devotees, simply because the hidden bits (the best aspect of previous Jams) has been added on extensively, but in terms of raw playability this is pretty far off "Extreme".

TOSHINDEN URA

BY SEGA £44.99 60%

One of the great mysteries of the world has to be the popularity of the Toshinden series. Like most of life's disasters, this can be placed squarely on the shoulders of PlayStation owners, who were obviously taken in by the flashy visuals of the original.

The thing is, when it comes to gameplay, Toshinden - in any of its guises both on PlayStation and Saturn - just doesn't cut the mustard. This new Saturn version looks like the best edition yet, making generous use of the



Saturn's high-resolution mode. The characters have also been redesigned (no more net-curtain clothing as opposed to PlayStation transparencies) to look less embarrassing.

But getting back to the gameplay, Toshinden's lack of moves and strategies makes this a poor substitute for the likes of Fighting Vipers and especially Virtua Fighter 2. And with Fighters MegaMix en route to UK shops, Toshinden URA becomes a release spectacularly without point.

TEMPEST 2000

BY INTERPLAY £24.99 80%

Just about the only reason to own an Atari Jaguar (in addition to getting a better version of Doom than the Saturn) is Jeff Minter's awesome playability festival, Tempest 2000.

So what if the original coin-op's around 15 years old? With the Minter audio-visual treatment, Tempest 2000



is just as fresh as ever it was, remaining one of the best games of all-time. And this Saturn version is almost identical. The thing is, "almost" isn't really good enough. Small portions of playability aren't as they should be, small bits have been changed and even the music isn't as good as the Jaguar version (odd, since the Jag version was on cartridge as opposed to the Saturn's CD power!).

Don't get us wrong, Tempest 2000 is still a great game and at this price it's very impressive indeed. It's just not as close a conversion as we hoped it would be. It's also doubly irritating to see the PlayStation version being markedly superior...

BATMAN FOREVER

BY ACCLAIM £39.99 63%

Kind of creeping into the shops before any review copy arriving, Batman Forever: The Arcade Game is actually a conversion of Acclaim's very own little known coin-op. And it's just not very good really. Taking control of the caped crusader and Robin, the boy hostage, one or two-player take part in this game which is best described as being like Final Fight with more power-ups. And less playability.

Acclaim's much vaunted motion capture system only looks impressive on the character select screen. In the game proper, the visuals are horribly blocky and unconvincing. The same digitised look as in Mortal Kombat appears to be the order of the day, but these sprites just don't take kindly to sprite-scaling. The visuals are matched by the poor quality gameplay. The power-ups are dull, the meanies you fight unimpressive, and the backgrounds repetitive. With Guardian Heroes already on the shelves and Die Hard Arcade out any day now, there's very little reason to even contemplate Batman Forever.

So don't.



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Introducing...

SHINING THE HOLY ARK

In the village here, our heroes are taking a bit of a rest in the church. As you can see the actual Shining game interface remains pretty much the same.











Judging by the sheer amounts of letters and phone calls the hapless SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE staff have had to endure from stuck gamestrels, it would appear that Shining Wisdom is one of your most favourite of games. Now SSM is proud to reveal the all-new sequel right here on this page!

So what's old and what's new? Definitely fitting into the former category is the control system. The excellent icons system employed since the original Megadrive game, Shining and the Darkness, remains in full effect and makes Shining the Holy Ark just as easy to get into as the other classics in the field.

What's new should be clear to see from the myriad screenshots dotted around the pages. Just about everything is now in three dimensions, making this adventure look a whole lot more special than previous Shining epics. Although not quite in the same league as say, a driving game like Sega Rally, Shining the Holy Ark does look very nice indeed. In fact, the rendered 3D villages and mountainsides look great. Definition is lost when you enter a caves system or a forest, but overall, the effect is of one great looking adventure.

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has just taken delivery of a final Japanese version of the game and has spent a few hours beavering away at it, despite the Japanese text (hey, it didn't stop up finishing Dark Savior!). The emphasis of the game remains on combat, which is no bad thing. Shining games have always been great fighting festivals and Shining the Holy Ark is no exception.

Overall then, this is definitely one game to look out for. And it IS getting a UK release. More details in a forthcoming issue.

Shining the Holy Ark is very similar in concept and execution to the previous Shining games, which is no bad thing. However, the big difference concerns the graphics, which are now utilising textured polygons in strategic areas, providing a visually superior role-playing experience. Marvellous.



Here we see our heroes suffering under a magical attack. From a bat. Hmmmm. Actually, there's tons of cool combat in Shining the Holy Ark, just like in the previous game.



Here you can see the more detailed 3D areas that Shining the Holy Ark contains. This is outside a mine tunnel system (which is pictured above), and is graphically lovely. The place to stock up is at the nearby village, which again is rendered in some stunning 3D. Yup, this game is cool all right.

Dear Newsagent,
In my view, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE is the greatest monthly publication in the world and I want you - yes YOU - to put it aside for me on a monthly basis, in case they're all stolen. Or bought. Or abducted by aliens or something.

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NEXT MONTH...



It's Manx TT to the max in the next issue! We have the first full review of this potentially ace biking game along with a brilliant showcase! Expect the best! Also we should be getting the first Resident Evil Saturn shots! The much vaunted Touring Car Championship interview might actually happen in time for the next issueand RPG fans should get a big kick out of our brilliant Dark Savior guide! Come on... it's SSM. You know the next issue will be ACE!

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, APRIL ISSUE, OUT 15 MARCH, PRICE £2.75.

Hold on to your shorts little man.......

here's your chance to play with the Big boys!

NBA JAM EXTREME







Hold on to your shorts little man - this is your chance to play with the big boys! NBA Jam Extreme takes Basket Ball to new heights, featuring ballistic graphics and ultra-addictive gameplay. Full 3D rotoscoping makes our 170 NBA superstars look prettier than the originals and now there's even more control from a range of killer 'Extreme' moves. You also get to eat clouds more than ever with an even wilder selection of anti-gravity, out-to-lunch monster dunks! Boomshakalaka! Don't look down!

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18+
LAST ONE STANDING WINS...
SEGA SATURN
PlayStation
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